September 1979

Alberta: The Strength & Wealth of Oil

Return of the 4-minute Short Story

★ THE NORTH AMERICAN ★

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REVIEW

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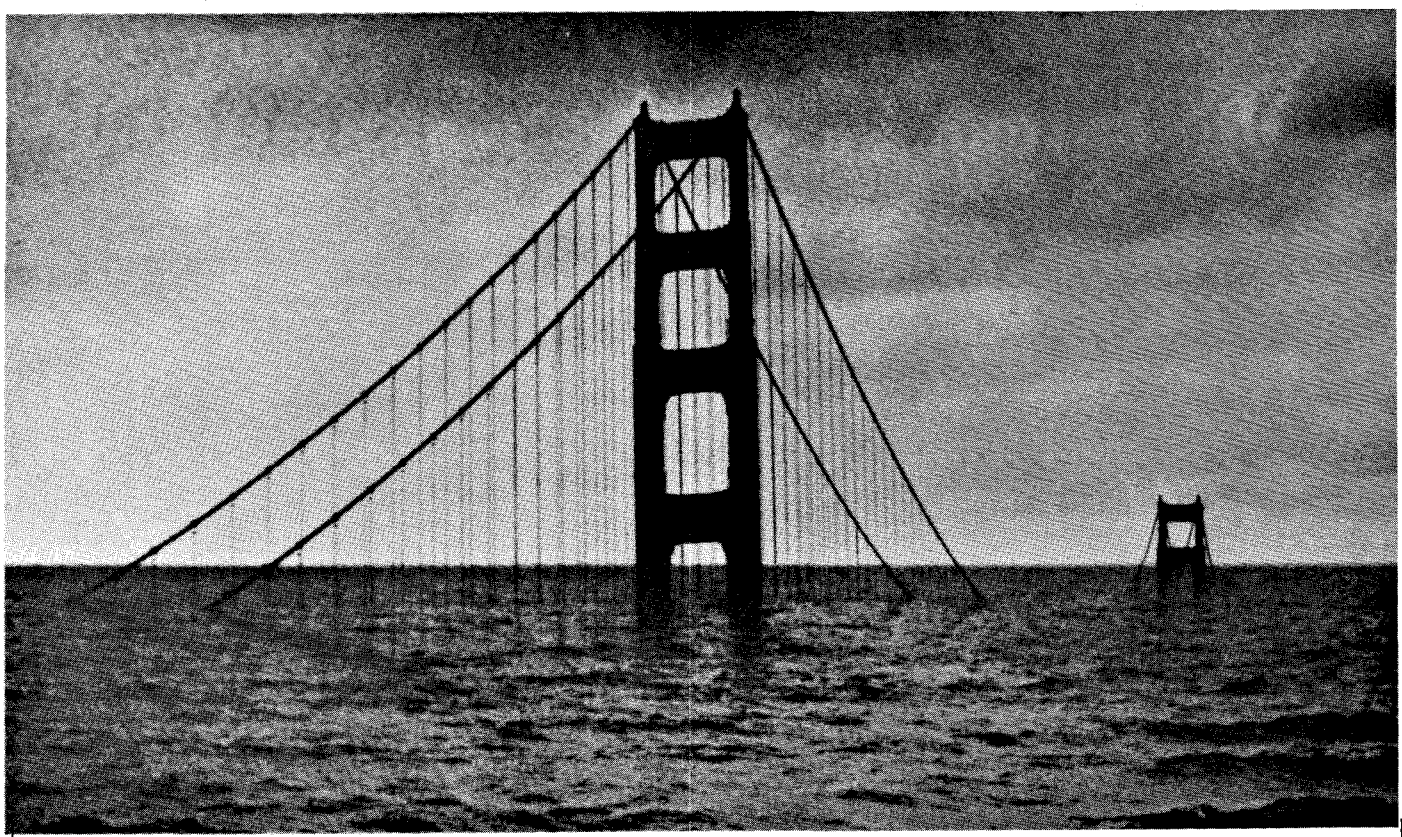

A probability report.

The Sierra Club doesn't say that our planet is likely to go under at any moment through our heedlessness. The composite photograph above merely depicts a possibility.

The probability is fairly remote.

Every day, however, we are making environmental changes with consequences we still don't understand or even suspect.

Take heat, for example.

Everytime we build a city block of high-rise buildings, we change the wind pattern so there's less wind to carry the heat away.

Everytime we heat or air-condition these buildings, use an electric appliance or light, drive a car or manufacture a product, 100% of that energy eventually winds up in the environment as heat.

And it's not only cities.

We know that when we clear a forest, the land beneath absorbs more heat. And this also happens when we plow fields, defoliate vegetation or take the life out of the soil. (One acre of grass, for example, has a potential cooling effect up to that of a 10-ton air conditioner.)

We are eliminating natural cooling systems and creating urban heat islands where the climate is hotter, rainier, cloudier, more humid and, of course, dirtier, too. These artificially created climates, called "microclimates" are already altering their immediate surrounding environment. And, if we create enough of them, we might alter the temperature of the entire earth.

One day as we approach the global heat limits, the polar ice caps could begin to melt, flooding some cities of the earth.

There are limits to the alterations we can make on our ecosystem. We would do well to slow the pace of change so we can determine these limits scientifically, before we discover them accidentally.

Sierra Club
Mills Tower San Francisco

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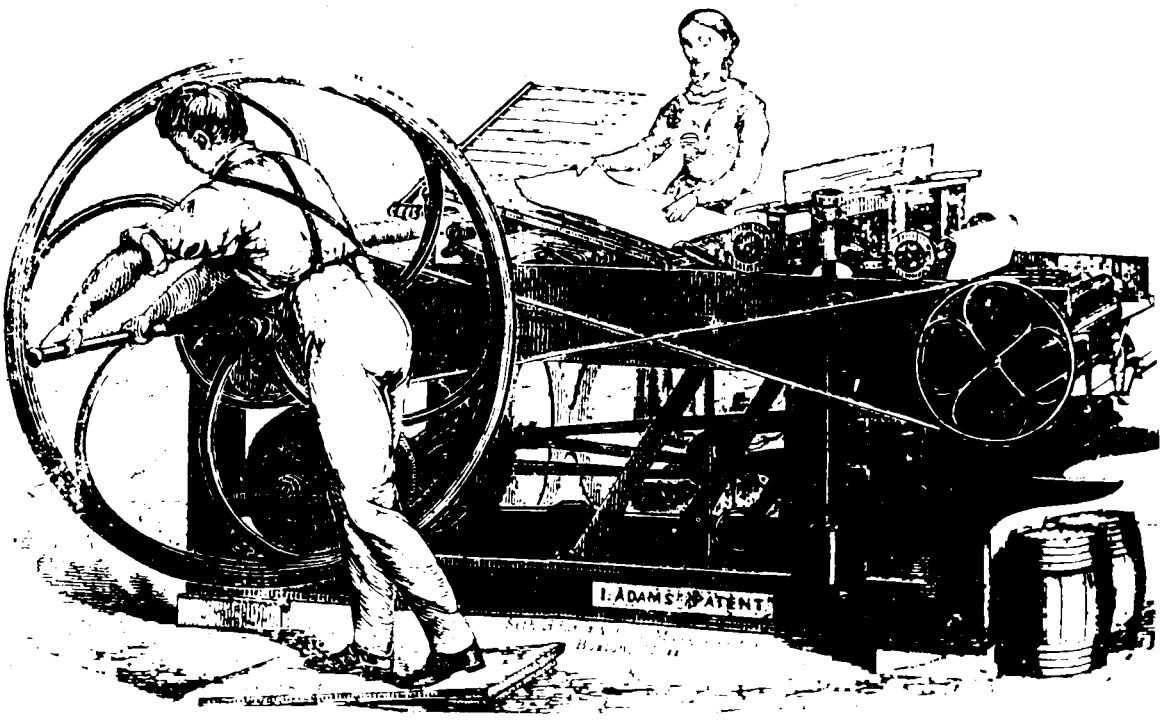

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Of Note:

"The Pitcher," a story by Andre Dubus which appeared in the Spring 1979 NAR, has been selected for inclusion in the 1980 *O. Henry Prize Stories* collection, to be published by Doubleday.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

We particularly draw your attention in this number of the NAR to the article beginning on page 45. It deals, we think, with one of the more remarkable of North American companies, Canada Square Corporation, and its subsidiary, Encon (short for Energy Conservation), a group of Toronto-based architects, engineers, and businessmen whose collective intelligence and imagination are responsible for the design of remarkably energy-efficient office buildings—two of them already built in Canada, and at least one scheduled for construction in the U.S. Their spokesman in this issue is Kenneth R. Cooper, the firm's chief architect. Mr. Cooper is as sensible and patient a man as one can imagine; his good sense is reflected in the success of the team-projects he directs, and his patience stood him in good stead during his hour or so of answering our ignorant questions. Other developers please copy.

Constant readers will note the return, after an absence of more than a year, of *Synecdoche*, the NAR's once-over-lightly treatment of poetry books received. Some readers will dread its re-appearance; even in the opinion of the editors here it is a mixed blessing, and poets themselves tell us they dislike it no matter whether their work is praised or blamed. Perhaps this latter fact is the best argument in *Synecdoche's* favor? In any case, we know of no better way of dealing with the staggering number of poetry books published each year. Most of the books are bad, and the best are not widely circulated. Hardly anyone *reads* poetry, fewer still buy the books; it may be that we are only reviewing poems at all because we feel guilty about the loneliness of the poets.

The editor of the NAR is recently returned from a year's leave of absence, during which time much of the magazine's editorial work was carried out via mail and phone. Once more on-the-scene, the editor is grateful to writers who kept their work patiently to themselves, to production people who properly interpreted long-distance messages, and especially to the magazine's business manager, who put in sixty-hour weeks for twenty hour wages and rectified without complaint the editor's frequent errors of omission and commission.

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EDITOR
Robley Wilson, Jr.

POETRY
Peter Cooley

ENVIRONMENT
Joseph W. Meeker

DESIGN
Roy Behrens
James Buckels

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Margaret Atwood
Richard Brook
Leo J. Hertzel
Kenneth Lash
John Lindberg
Barry Lopez
Stephen Minot
Lawrence Sturhahn

BUSINESS MANAGER
Charlotte L. Wilson

EDITORIAL &
BUSINESS OFFICES:

University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

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EDUCATING ENGINEERS

Questions of Professional Responsibility

The development of modern technology has been a great adventure that many people have justly regarded as the conquest of nature. Until recently, most engineers have prided themselves on making this conquest possible. Many, perhaps most, still do. What other attitude is possible for them? Can engineering be anything else but the conquest of nature?

Perhaps it is obvious from my tone that I find the conquest of nature questionable at best. Yet I must immediately make clear that I am not speaking from across a supposed gap between the so-called "two cultures"; I am not opposed to engineers or engineering, nor am I ignorant about them. I teach American Studies, Mythology, and Technical Writing to engineering students, and I cannot take pride in what I do unless I can take pride in what they are going to do. The question involves my professional integrity as well as theirs. I cannot have professional integrity unless my students learn to have it. Therefore, although I am not an engineer, the issue of professional responsibility in engineering is inseparable from the issue of my own professional responsibility, and it is also inseparable from the day-to-day problem of how I should approach my teaching. Further, the professional attitude of future engineers is crucially important to society. It may be one of the most important issues we can address.

If I were a humanist, my problem would be immensely complicated and probably hopeless. Fortunately, I am not a humanist. I am a cultural ecologist with a literary background. Therefore, I can set to one side the "two cultures" approach, which completely blocks any meaningful resolution of the question. I can point out with no discomfort that the past attitude of engineers bears a close affinity, not to the vocabulary or preoccupations of those who consider themselves humanists, but to the dominant conception in our society about the supreme importance of strictly human interests in the general scheme of life. Humanism, if not the cause, is certainly the essence of that ignorantly anthropocentric outlook. If as J.B. Bury suggests we may call Diderot a humanist, then by the same token we may say that engineers have been humanists.[1] Nor is the stance of Diderot very different in its ultimate significance from that of Renaissance thinkers like Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola.

To forestall quibbles, I immediately admit that there are important differences between Renaissance metaphysics and the original Renaissance literary cult that first became known as humanism. Diderot is more distant still from the literary ideal as such. Yet the pressure of history allows us no choice but to use the term "humanism" for that relentless trend in which, from our perspective now, they all take part and become identifiable with the purposes that have guided engineering, as well as guiding the thrust of society. That trend is the ever increasing tendency to consider human life apart from all else—a tendency which inevitably becomes indistinguishable from the assumption that life has no value apart from human purpose. This humanist view displays and indeed constitutes humanism's inherently non-systemic, non-ecological character.

Moreover, although an outlook such as Pico's set forth the notion of human improvement in terms which abjured any concern for bodily welfare, the pressure of historical assimilation has made all forms of improvement inseparable under the rubric of "progress." Progess promises a general amelioration of human life, making possible for everyone good education, cultivated humanistic sensibility, and not only the provision of bodily necessities but the addition of every material comfort. That education, insofar as it has been attainable, has of course been a humanist education singing the praises of human achievement through the power of human intellect, and in effect defining the world as something for that intellect to exercise itself upon. Even material comfort itself is subsumed under the purposes which humanism in its more self-conscious moods likes to dwell upon; I have heard people maintain that material progress is necessary to provide us with energy slaves so that we can all be free to spend more time exercising our more purely human (i.e., mental) faculties.

In short, there is a comprehensive ideology we may fairly call humanism, without necessarily having in mind any one of the parochial ideologies that went to shape it as a cultural and social trend. It is the dominant ideology of modern times, comprehending as it does both capitalism and socialism, and being not merely an ideology, but the practical commitment of every society that is modern or trying to become so. Its main practical effect is to increase without limit the per capita amounts of resource use, pollution, and environmental destruction. Its rationale is basically its commitment to human self-importance—a generalized human egotism that encourages socially and environmentally corrosive egotism in every human individual.[2] Without doing any injustice to the pose of today's self-conscious humanist, we may say that the fun-

[1] J.B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry Into Its Growth and Origin* (New York: Dover, 1955), p. 159.

[2] David Ehrenfeld, *The Arrogance of Humanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 238 ff.

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damental aim of humanism is to *improve the human condition*. In practice, this means that engineering has indeed been at the service of an outlook that at its foundation is humanistic. Modern engineering has, in fact, had no other purpose.[3]

Engineers follow notions of improvement set forth originally by poets and philosophers dreaming a world of perfect felicity for man. In its engineering manifestation, then, humanism contrives to manipulate the environment in ways that its philosophical and literary manifestations deem beneficial—to make improvements that accord with human purposes. The attainment of such improvement is called *progress*, which has been the essential meaning of humanist thought as that thought has evolved to dominate society. In those terms we can even regard modern science as a creation of humanism. Operationally, modern science has been humanism's technique for defining the world as a manipulable object and for discovering the basis for effective procedures of manipulation. Engineers have simply applied those procedures in carrying out projects determined by humanistic notions of improvement.

The question of professional responsibility before me as an interdisciplinary generalist teaching engineers—and by rights even more urgently before engineers themselves—boils down to whether we can define full professional adequacy in engineering merely as technical competence to carry out such projects. In terms of cultural ecology, this amounts to asking whether we should try to establish a radical separation between engineering and humanism to replace the fantasy separation that our cultural self-delusion has maintained. I started out by asking whether we had to identify engineering with the conquest of nature. In fact, *humanism* is the conquest of nature. This is humanism's fundamental arrogance and irresponsibility. Engineers like to think of themselves as being committed to responsibility. Can engineering turn away from the conquest of nature? Can engineering behave with full responsibility? Can there be a non-humanist engineering?

[3]Joseph W. Meeker, *The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology* (New York: Scribner's, 1974), pp. 40-41.

I do not intend here to argue for nature in terms of wilderness as such, though what I say *mutatis mutandis* can apply in principle to the protection of wilderness. However, the most immediate difficulty inherent in the project to conquer nature is its effect on *human nature*—its deleterious effect on society, and the concomitant diminution of human personality which results from the loss of sustaining interpersonal fabric. Humanistic egotism makes people unable to know society as anything but an aggregate of separate egos, or the earth as anything but an aggregate of mere non-human bits and pieces. But notwithstanding the vaunted importance of those isolated egos, they become objects of manipulation just as surely as the bits and pieces of estranged nature do—and by means of the same process. The industrial system is impossible unless most people in the industrial machine obey

orders like robots. In *The Abolition of Man*, a good book of uneven perspicacity, C.S. Lewis states a number of penetrating truths. Here is the most important one: "Man's power over Nature turns out to be a power exerted by some men over other men with Nature as its instrument."[4] That, and not the environmental problem as usually conceived, is the most immediate professional dilemma of the engineer.

The exaggeration of separate human importance has created a general social estrangement such that the individual can have no real significance. There are no longer any transcendent interpersonal bonds that can confer fully differentiated individual significance.[5] Engineering has contributed to this situation not only because it has created the technological basis for industrial production as such, but also because industrial technology has been the means whereby the isolation of individuals in socially irrelevant modules has become possible. Survival—even comfort—has become possible without reference to others. People's material needs are provided for not through binding human contact, but through mere distribution of standardized goods and services, which can be routed in any combination and at any rate to any number of individual customers whose main relationship then is to the general productive mechanism rather than to other people as such. The mechanism requires that human behavior must be compatible with the requirements of mass production; insofar as possible, individuals must be replaceable and interchangeable parts. Their relationship with each other becomes as exterior and standardized as their relationship to the mass system. Differentiated, unique personalities become as impossible as the differentiated social networks that once sustained them. Quite simply, the energy that once flowed through those networks no longer does; energy now flows in wires and pipes. The effort to satisfy basic material needs that once gave urgency to social relationships and filled them with sustaining material content no longer exists. It has been engineered out of existence in an attempt to fulfill the humanist fantasy of liberation from mundane concerns deemed unworthy of the human intellect, or to realize the fantasy of pastoral felicity and effortless accommodation.

* * *

The point is that engineers do not merely design hardware; they design the material framework of society, and thus they design social relations as well. Its effect on social ecology is the greatest ecological impact of engineering. If engineers are to be fully professional, they must take full professional responsibility for their ac-

[4]C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), p. 69. See also Meeker, *The Spheres of Life: An Introduction To World Ecology* (New York: Scribner's, 1975), p. 95 ff.

[5]Edward Goldsmith, *The Stable Society* (Wadebridge, Cornwall, England: Wadebridge Press, 1978).

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tions. Engineering must recognize and address its social science dimension; the engineer must be a social scientist as well as a designer of equipment and material processes.

The alternative view, still probably typical of most engineers, is that an engineer should merely *react* to situations or requirements that he must accept as given; he should not presume to make judgments except in terms of his technical expertise, which should be as narrowly specialized as possible so that he can be maximally expert at what he does. Social responsibility tends to be regarded in terms of adherence to government regulations. In practice, an engineer who is educated to react will tend to criticize those regulations only on the basis of whether they make his job more difficult. He will feel little professional obligation to evaluate and criticize policy on broader grounds, and certainly he will not feel obligated to take a public stand *as a professional* on questions of resource use and general ecological impact (including social impact) that go beyond the purview of the regulations.

To be sure, technical competence is a *sine qua non* of adequacy in any profession. But if technical competence is all we mean when we say an engineer is professional, then we cannot regard engineering as a profession on the same footing as other learned professions, which are ultimately based on standards of ethics and responsibility that go far beyond definition according to merely technical criteria. We are left with a conception of the engineer as no more than a high-grade technician, a functionary not fully professional—that is, with no responsibility for his actions beyond their technical adequacy. A glorified mechanic. But someone who is professional in the fullest sense is responsible for taking into account the *ultimate* meaning of his professional actions, and is expected to have the background for doing so. We must assume that a real professional is the ultimate authority for all his own professional acts—then he can't pass the buck, can't define himself as someone who merely reacts to given situations.

Medicine affords the most readily understandable examples of what full professional responsibility entails. We quite rightly demand that physicians base their judgments ultimately on considerations that go beyond the criteria of mere technical feasibility. Good surgery, for example, is far more than surgery alone—consider the ethics of plastic surgery with respect to patients who want to act out fantasies. Nor does the physical and mental welfare of an individual patient provide absolute grounds for judgment. In deciding whether to perform abortions, a physician must bring to bear his philosophy of social welfare, and must base that on a still broader philosophy about the meaning of life.

Medicine should also take into account the effect of social organization on individual welfare—and this, perhaps, should receive the greatest emphasis. Yet this is exactly where medicine has been most remiss in its professional obligation, even though Rudolph Virchow pointed out medicine's social obligation as long ago as 1848 in his analysis of the relationship between poverty and disease. As René Dubos remarks, Virchow's findings imply that medicine must be a social science.[6]

On just such grounds I maintain that truly professional engineering must be a social science. Medicine provides an excellent comparison, because it is now so obvious that problems of medicine and engineering intersect. Engineering must be a social science, and must also be something of a medical science and a biological science. Evidence that most cancer is due to industrial pollution establishes that beyond doubt. The truly professional engineer must ask whether he has any right to help manufacture a questionable substance or engage in a process which releases questionable wastes. Nor should he assume that a substance is harmless until proven otherwise; the only responsible attitude is to maintain that any new substance, or any unusually large concentration of a previously existing substance, will be harmful, and that we should not manufacture it until it is proven harmless. Physicians are not the only ones culpable for thalidomide; the engineers who made possible its manufacture are equally to blame.

In the past we have taken the unwarranted liberty of making radical changes in an evironmental system that we did not understand; yet we have long known that random changes in any orderly system are likely to do harm. We are not dealing in vague sentiment here—from a strictly *engineering* point of view, it should appear most reasonable to hold suspect any proposed radical departure from conditions which prevailed at the time when the human species developed its present phylogenetic constitution. We should be particularly wary of biochemical effects.

Such practical questions of systemic integrity can show us how to establish a real separation between engineering and humanism. Unlike ostensive humanism, engineering can assimilate systemic, ecological thinking. To the extent that it does, we will have the non-humanist, responsible engineering we so badly need. At present, many engineers advocate a "broader" curriculum for engineering students. Naïvely, they suppose this would require a better grounding in the humanist tradition, which panders to their desire for cultural approval. Those of us in engineering education who have been immunized against the self-adulating rhetoric of humanism must disabuse our engineering colleagues before they overload the curriculum with humanist propaganda. Grounding in traditional humanism will merely deceive the students into feeling well-educated, while making them better able to rationalize their acts and fend off real systemic analysis.

* * *

To develop an adequate philosophy, engineering does not have to borrow from humanism. The *principles of good systems design* should provide an adequate basis, as long as engineering develops a broader perspective regarding the systems it deals with. Engineers must begin to apply good engineering analysis to issues that in the past they have pretended they could ignore. Engineers have produced many unanticipated and undesirable effects not because they have failed to be humanists, but because they have failed to be thoroughgoing as engineers. Adequate grounding in systems science will make obvious the fact that even a concern for medical effects as such is not good enough for good engineering; the social organization which brought about those effects is also part of the problem. This is why I

[6] René Dubos, *Mirage of Health* (New York: Doubleday, 1959), p. 126.

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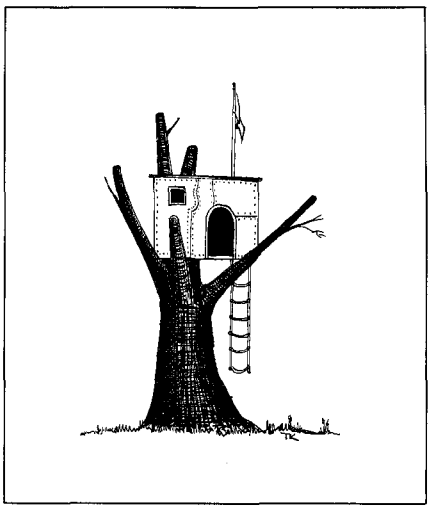
emphasize the *social* aspects of the considerations to which engineering must pay attention.

In the long run, there is little point in merely designing ways to mitigate the deleterious effects of productive operations when such effects are the inevitable result of the principles constituting the organizations involved—principles that engineers have fostered without understanding the implications of what they were doing. Industrial pollution does not continue because people are unaware or unconcerned, but because people generally have no control over what is going on, even at the local level. The activities of giant corporations dominate our lives, and as long as we accept the principles on which they operate, we will be helpless before them. Engineers are the ones who have done most to enable the development of industrial giantism, with its attendant transformations of community life, family life, and behavioral values generally, not to mention its virtual destruction of competitive free enterprise. Ironically enough, most engineers tend to view themselves as social conservatives. Yet their activities have made and continue to make inevitable the most radical kind of social change, all because they refused to examine the implications of what they were doing.[7]

Even if engineers as a group would prefer to avoid the responsibility of full professionalism, society cannot allow them such a luxury any longer. What engineers do is too important; the effects of their activities are too profound. The advice of a physician affects one life at a time; the advice of an engineer may determine whether hundreds of people develop cancer ten or twenty years later. We can no longer afford the kind of ignorant specialization that hampered understanding in the past. We must insist on the most rigorous, fully developed, and comprehensive kind of profesional standards in engineering, and we must give engineers an education that makes them capable of living up to standards of that kind.

This involves some fundamental re-thinking about the very nature of an engineering curriculum. The education I mean must be integral with technical instruction; it cannot be a mere addition to the technical curriculum. Courses aimed at giving "breadth" tend to be superficial, and to be regarded as extraneous by the students. If we cannot make the change an integral part of engineering instruction, we will continue to graduate engineers who have only the technical skill to perform as narrowly based, irresponsible functionaries having no conception of the larger and more important effects of their activities. Formal training in humanist thought patterns will only mask their basic failure, while encouraging them to adopt the snobbish élitism typical of those who have humanist pretensions.

Once we reject subservience to humanist ideology, we no longer have to fear that a broader engineering curriculum would interfere with



the development of technical competence. As I have said, a meaningful approach to ecological (including social) problems would first of all require broader understanding of the most fundamental skill that any engineer must have—the ability to analyze and comprehend the *system* with which he must deal. *Systems analysis* is a basic method of ecological study, which the ecologist tries to make as rigorous, as exact, as quantitative as it can be. *Energetics* is an essential topic for systems analysis in ecology, and along with the study of *material and information flow* it should be a basic topic for an approach to non-humanist engineering. Properly understood, this approach provides a tool for *social* analysis organized in a way clearly relevant to the technical considerations of engineering, couched in a language easily assimilable to the language that engineers already know. An engineer should know how to think about social organization as a *control system*. All engineering is essentially systems engineering of one kind or another; our aim must be to give every engineer a more *generalized* understanding of systems thinking and an ability to apply that thinking to a wider range of systems, making it possible for each engineer to relate his specialty to its broader systemic context in a professionally meaningful way.

Present engineering education is in effect a method for training people to ignore insofar as possible everything that does not bear directly on the immediate technical problem. The main result of this is a tendency to suboptimize partial systems models in terms of very unrealistically defined criteria of "demand" and "need." These simplistic criteria enable planning to go forward without any analysis of systemic context and systemic alternatives. To proceed in such willfull ignorance is unprofessional.

If the engineering profession had acted with professional responsibility concerning the general systemic problem of energy and resource use, we might have been able to wait another generation before tapping Alaskan oil, instead of rushing to deplete it as quickly as possible for our present inexcusably wasteful energy system. We have the technological capability to double the gasoline mileage that we presently get from automobiles. This would easily save more than ten percent of our petroleum consumption, and would cut automobile-caused air pollution nearly in half, without interfering at all with the traditional (and in itself wasteful) American pattern of individual car ownership. If mineral resource engineers had recommended that instead of investing energy, manpower, and materials in the Alyeska pipeline we might serve ourselves far better by investing them to improve automotive efficiency, the country would have had a realistic choice.(A few other simple changes could boost petroleum savings to over twenty percent without any appreciable change in our lifestyle. We could easily do without automatic transmissions and automobile air conditioners. We could re-refine more of our used oil. We could use better tax

[7]J.C. Mathes and Donald H. Gray, "The Engineer as a Social Radical," *The Ecologist*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (May 1975), 119-125.

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breaks, subsidies, and legal requirements to push hard for better building insulation.)

The systemic view, which we could also call the operational or *realistic* view, would enable the engineer to take a much more solid pride in his work. We could even call this view the *conservative* view, for a conservative in the best sense is someone who is process-oriented—that is, "concerned for the on-going inter-relationships and effects of elements within the system on each other."[8] It is also the only conceivable *professional* view. At present, a technically competent engineer is in the position of designing good components for use in a badly designed overall system—a system that we could rapidly re-design for better energy efficiency, without any essentially new technology, and without radical social change.

Engineers are supposed to thrive on challenge, and re-designing our entire system is no more than engineers have already done or enabled others to do. As I have noted, the pervasive changes that have created our present situation, including massive social changes that most engineers probably deplore, are a direct result of technological innovations developed by engineers who lacked an adequate concept of professional responsibility. They evaluated their activities in terms of immediate outputs, thus blocking awareness of what they were really doing. They failed to see that *every output is also an input* that changes systemic organization.[9]

Recent engineering has made everyone more and more dependent on distant sources over which they can have no direct influence. Engineering has designed a situation in which increasing control by centralized bureaucracies has become inevitable. The monstrous federal bureaucracy that fills conservatives with such disgust is a monument to the degree of impact engineers have had; their headlong rush to introduce technical innovation has completely revolutionized our political life, making local self-regulation and independence nearly impossible.

A still more profound effect of relentless technological change has been the fundamental *re-design of basic personality*—i.e. standard behavior patterns—due to a complete change in the material basis for interpersonal relations and for the expectations that people have. We have engineered individual self-reliance out of existence. People who are cogs in a giant centralized corporate machine are not going to be self-reliant, though they may cling to the fantasy and soothe themselves with rhetoric. But they feel their helplessness, so they become addicts to the drug of consumerism, the endless puchase of endless trivial products. The systemic effects of technological innovation have created a population with an ever-increasing proportion of individuals who demand instant gratification, who have been programmed to "need" constant novelty. Such people represent a new kind of typical personality, incapable of restriction, incapable of permanent relationships, intolerant of life's ordinary demands. They are no longer differentiated individuals whose lives have unique value, but interchangeable components in jobs where replacements are always available, and one is as good as the next. The same inevitably becomes true of personal relationships. One worker is as good as another, one job is as good as another, one spouse is as good as another. This is freedom as designed by our present technology, the creation of engineers who just wanted to do their specialized thing, and let somebody else worry about the consequences.

Whimsical self-indulgence is inevitable in a society of frenetic mobility, where an interchangeable technology creates interchangeable communities full of interchangeable people—the existence of one the function of the other. "Where are the conservative satisfactions of preparing a meal, working up a sweat digging in the garden, doggedly finishing shovelling the driveway? What are we being conditioned to need and feel?"[10] The flat sameness of mental life reflects the surroundings. Flat and yet full of violent random motion, people rushing to and fro. A perfect analog of increasing thermal motion due to increasing energy flow—more and more violent, rapid, and interchangeably identical. "Due to the impact of technological development . . . . the cooperation and communication that used to accompany life's chores is being built out of our social systems . . . . The family has become atomized as a result of the impact of technological devices, conveniences and values on home life."[11] Indeed, the engineer who provides such devices or provides the materials and energy for them is a *social* engineer without parallel.

* * *

Highway construction provides an excellent example of profoundly revolutionary social engineering. The engineers who design highways at the same time completely redesign the communities along the route, without consulting the inhabitants, who are then easy prey to unscrupulous entrepreneurs who thrive in a destabilized environment. Our community deterioration has been *engineered*, whether deliberately or not. Nothing else short of enemy invasion could have transformed communities so entirely in so short a time.

Highways also *destroy farmland*, both directly and by causing suburban expansion. Agricultural land has disappeared at the rate of a *million acres a year*.[12] Thus highway engineers—we might as well call them highwaymen—without protest, warning, or comment design and put into effect the most criminal resource destruction of all time. Scorched-earth warfare is nothing by comparison. Clearly this loss is *not an agricultural problem, but an engineering problem*—or, rather, any basis for pretending that there is a boundary between the two has entirely disappeared. A good engineer must be conversant with the agricultural problem in order to assess properly the feasibility of a given highway project. Similarly, he must be conversant with the social effects of his design. In any change associated with technological activity, the social problem *is* the engineering problem.

Worse than the highway problem is the general manipulation of society by the industrial commercial bureaucracies, all pretending to offer choice while closing off options. Corporate

[8]Mathes and Gray, 124.
[9]Mathes and Gray, 125.
[10]Mathes and Gray, 123.
[11]Mathes and Gray, 123.
[12]Paul B. Sears, "The Inexorable Problem of Space," *The Subversive Science: Essays Toward An Ecology of Man*, ed. Paul Shepard and Daniel McKinley (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), p. 87.

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economics really amounts to a collusion of private interests in a non-accountable private government controlling nearly every detail of our lives. The limited liability corporation defined as a juridical person is a new kind of *control* system, and as such it is a *suitable topic for engineering analysis*. From a systems point of view, the bad thing about such government is that it is unnatural—that is, it is badly designed and has to be maintained by an excessive energy flow. It is an attempt to deny systemic reality. It is inherently irresponsible, since it is set up precisely to allow those in control to affect others without paying attention to the full responses of those whom they affect. *Thus to inhibit diversity of response from within a system is automatically to increase the energy cost of maintaining the system*.[13] Any engineer should be at least minimally conversant with what systems analysis might have to say about such a problem, and should be ready to contribute to the analysis from his own point of view.

In fact, we do not even need subtle analysis to prove that our system tends to maximize energy and materials consumption, nor do we need to argue about whether such a tendency is indefinitely sustainable. We need only ask how to decide on what energy and resource and organizational criteria we must use to indicate a consumption level that *is* sustainable, and how to apply those criteria. How should we go about designing a system that will stay at a sustainable level? This is clearly the engineering and social question for our times, and I should not have to ask it—any professionally responsible engineer should have thought of it ten years ago. Unfortunately, engineering has failed to develop real professional responsibility because, as I suggested at the outset, engineering has been dominated by humanist values, which are inherently anti-systemic and, therefore, inherently irresponsible. The humanist dream of "progress" to which engineers have devoted themselves is a manifestation of humanism's fantasy concerning what it regards as human freedom, dignity, and power. Manipulation of the world both exhibits these things and proves that such manipulation is justified—if you are free, you have a right to act freely. There is a built-in tendency, therefore, to identify "progress" with anything that increases the amount of energy and material that people control.

When the inevitable ill results of such behavior become too obvious to ignore, those non-engineers consciously devoted to ostensive humanism pat themselves on the back for being sensitive enough to notice the problem, while they chide engineers for creating it. The engineers then are supposed to take care of it. Non-engineering humanists are proud of themselves for having well-articulated noble sentiments, and they feel that they have fulfilled their obligation when they voice those sentiments. These non-engineers assume, however, that the solution to a problem will always allow them to retain unlimited control over energy and materials, and they humanely insist that all people should have such benefits. Thus the key to humanism—that is, to "progress"—is a belief that we can have our cake and eat it, too—that we can somehow ignore the second law of thermodynamics. That is the belief embodied in our society's basic design assumption that energy and materials use should increase every year—that we should attempt to maintain unlimited growth. The fact that engineers have accepted such a design assumption argues that engineers have been trained to be humanists first and engineers second.

Engineers by themselves cannot solve our problem, but if engineers will not take full professional responsibility for what they do, we will all continue to be helpless. *Engineering education* may be the key to the modern dilemma. Those who have addressed this problem have usually suggested, in effect, that engineers need more humanist propaganda. But engineers are already unconscious humanists, much to our detriment. The cure is not to make them conscious humanists, but to make them able to apply systemically and ecologically valid engineering analysis to the humanist assumptions that have dominated them and the rest of us. *Engineers must become responsible for the social meaning of their acts*. Only then will they truly have professional integrity. Only then will they truly benefit society.

—Peter Hartley

[13]Ramon Margalef, *Perspectives In Ecological Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 21.

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WOODY ALLEN:

The Phenom among the Phenomena

"Manhattan" drew ecstatic reviews, from *New Yorker* across the magazine world and down to the daily papers. Someone called it a soliloquy. All right. It cries out like Hamlet doing a turn at *The Purple Onion* that life is fell and we its comic figurines are, when the laughing's done, faithless, foul, and fouled-up. I'm willing to agree. But not on the evidence offered in this film. Not on the say-so of the people portrayed in this film.

Look at them, these denizens. The schoolteacher who, as Woody says, would rather have a second-hand Porsche than write his book. Of course he would. He's offered us as the consummate second-hander. His wife is roughly sketched, there to be abused, to be turned into second-hand goods. Diane Keaton's character is the female mirror-image of Woody's: she's reached a certain age without the faintest idea of what she wants to be or who she is now. She trusts only what is easy—the flabby prof working away at his defeat; the hokiest of hack work, turning movies into recycled paperbacks; jerking around New York with the latest in jargonspeak about the arts. And look at Woody, the hero, the supreme one-liner, what's he doing with this gang of Guildensterns? What's he doing playing a dirty old man at 42? He can't wait? When things go wrong at his TV writing job he ups and quits, in a moment's tantrum. Maybe that's algebraic heroics, i.e., quitting TV = good/noble + y. As life heroics it's another case of running away. Everybody runs away in "Manhattan." He was good at his job, they implored him to stay, maybe they'd have bought his better stuff. Nope. Quit and . . . write a book! Jesus Christ, the irony. Now that nobody reads, the ultimate in devotion to life is "writing a book." Little Hemingway, the high school kid fighting against the freedoms of wealth and traveling parents, finds that sharing a pizza in bed with someone is warm enough to feel like love. Woody doesn't want love. Cut it out, he says, we're just playing around. He keeps running away from her. Until he succeeds. Then he turns and runs back. Too late. It's always too late. For what? For life to pant its way up to fantasy?

What fantasy, through the looking glass to Bloomingdale's? Many reviews spoke of the film as a paean to Manhattan, the poetry of the city. They exclaimed at the honesty, the high perception, of using black and white. There isn't any black and white in New York City, not even at the melting edge of Harlem. There are flashes of cardinal red, purple, one round spot of green, all against a background of asphalt gray. Did you notice that everywhere they went there were stopsigns, stoplights, ropes, corridors, guards, fences, door locks, apartments like a construct of children's boxes? The delight portrayed is that of the Egyptian tomb, acquired claustrophilia decked out with golden ornament. That tiny table in the bar they're sitting at when the film opens. Their talk at that table. Round and round about nothing, till it disappears up or down its own holes.

The awful pretensions of artiness, by a group of people whose care about art extends only to wearing it. If none of them says one thing even accurate let alone original about art it is because they can't. They don't care enough about art to have anything worth saying about it.

Comedy has its reasons. And is itself a reasoning. It reacts to all that is misfitting in life by drawing the misfit, the caricature of human behavior and response hopelessly at sea. Not like Captain Ahab. Exactly not like him, the other hemisphere of reaction. He calls madness most helpful to his cause, as do in one or another of the available ways all tragic heroes. That person in control of his or her reason is not available for tragedy. For comedy, yes, which is the response of intelligence to what is dread and fearful. Comedy *thinks*. Perhaps because it is afraid to feel (any longer, any further). And it does not want its audience to feel (except the superiority, the happy venting, of laughter), but to perceive in a kind of tranquility. Any strong emotional involvement with the proposed subject of laughter rules out the desired response. As in ethnic jokes with a committed ethnic, women jokes with an on-duty feminist. One must be neutral—at the moment—to join in a laugh because laughter always has a target. Someone, something, is taking a sock.

In comedy as in tragedy, there's always an enemy. It doesn't matter that in comedy nobody gets killed; an attack is mounted just the same. And from the same home base of human fears . . . and human inclination to fight back.

Woody Allen, in his various guises, fights back superbly against the things he settles upon as trying all too successfully to make him feel diminished. A tough neighborhood to grow up in ("We stole hubcaps . . . from moving cars."); being a 125-lb. weakling, and a funny face; being an ex-object to women; being morose and reflective in a grinning, knee-jerk world. Fine. We all suffer some of that. We know the enemy he's taking his best shot at. But suddenly he goes Pogo, says he has met the enemy and they is us. Inquire within. It's the intricate spin of our innards that has us in thrall. On the other hand it's not my fault that I've become my own best enemy. It's modern times (compare Chaplin), it's Manhattan, it's the newest in nagging brought back from The Cape of Good Hope by the psy-

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chological sailors; it's the phenomena of the times. The rich and the ghetto all together singing the twentieth-century international anthem: *It ain't . . . my fault.*

Presumably we are wingless flies. Manhattan, I suppose, is a bottle we buzz in. The sound, my friend Alice reminds me, may be that of comic realism. All right. Be compassionate (as Woody, *auteur,* is being), laugh gently. Identify. No, I won't. I don't want to disappear down Woody's couch. As for the rest, if they were types I could laugh at them and at our world; if they were individuals I could empathize. They're neither. They're walking facsimiles of contemporary fad. Group phenomena.

Socially this is a film about a bunch, a bunch on the block. There are other bunches like it, in California. There are wax reproductions in Iowa. So it comes down to sociology. Not the Oscar Lewis kind but the bits and pieces industry, the academic accountants engaged in a temporal totting up of the stains, glad and sad, in human underthings. This kind of approach doesn't lead to Balzac and *The Human Comedy* but to *People* magazine and The Days of Diversion. Celebrities. Celebrities are mere anecdote, not story.

Sleeper and *Annie Hall* had action you could feel, crazy and sad heroics, familiar and useful. Of sufficient magnitude. I suppose this time of the anti-hero in drama will have its equivalent in the anti-type in comedy. But it is a lessened circumstance. One is crying with less profound provocation, laughing with less intelligent reason. The drift toward the diminished. *(Woody!)*

I have found Woody Allen to be by far the most acute and encompassing comic and wit of my later time. I love him. If I were his poppa I'd say Woody, get up, go out and make some new friends. And don't tell people so much about your life. Who wants to know so much, the library? And thank God you're a Jew, but by now you should maybe be getting used to it, you're what, 45? By which Woody, I don't mean for instance you should start hanging out with Swedes. . . .

* * *

Three forks, two knives, and a spoon: to John Irving's *The World According to Garp* and to Philip Roth's "The Ghost Writer" (*The New Yorker,* June 25 and July 2, 1979). Both are about writers; the latter is about writing.

* * *

The Alka-Seltzer Award: to Orson Welles, for adding (himself) to the synonyms for "flatulence."

* * *

The deck edges out a few feet over the upper waters of Green Bay. I came out one morning to find a pair of fledgling swallows sitting at its outer edge, near the corner post. They were huddled together. Injured? I couldn't tell. Not dead. They fluttered a little, puffing up and subsiding. I took an Indian step forward. They didn't move. Could they fly? How else could they have gotten here? But they were very small. They were learning—they were being "taught" to fly! Where was the mother? Had they hurt themselves getting here? If I went close enough to find out, or better yet somehow to gather them up from that edge over the water and set them down behind the cottage, under the trees . . . I would probably frighten them into fluttering about and falling off. I sat down to watch them, and to think further of what to do. I was afraid for them—probably, I thought, out of my ignorance and the pathetic fallacy. But they hardly stirred unless another bird came by, at which moment in unison they'd raise their heads up on their skinny necks, open their craws so wide I could see the flash of red, and cry for food. The birds went by them like a filled bus. They'd settle back and huddle together again. I don't know how long I sat there. I couldn't think of anything to do. Finally I went inside, tore small pieces of crust from a roll, came back out and very gingerly tossed one round piece in their direction. They stood, but didn't panic. I tossed the rest, this time close to them. One chick looked at the crumbs, walked up to one and sat on it. The other went over and huddled next to him. I had no phone, no SPCA to call, no friendly ornithologist up the road. I kept sitting there. We all sat there, the sun getting higher. No bird came. It was going to be up to them. They'll be all right, I thought, they'll make it, there are hundreds of swallows up here and at Washington Island, thousands. A grackle came and sat up on the deck rail for a minute, then left. Gulls were wheeling by. The herd—I liked to call it a herd—of twenty or so mallards went paddling up and back past the deck, busy, quacking like five o'clock in the saloon. I saw some swallows but none stopped for us. Finally, for no apparent reason but with clear purpose, the two fledglings stood up, went to the edge of the deck, flapped their miniature wings, and dove off. And flew! "Go it!" I yelled. "Not *that* way!" They did nicely for fifty feet, then down they went, both of them, into the water. They floated a breathless moment, up and down on the small waves, then began flapping their wings to propel themselves . . . toward shore. It was a heartbreaking effort, bringing those small soaked wings up out of the water, but they fought for it and kept fighting for it. When the first one washed himself up on a rock near shore he collapsed there, unable to move another inch, though only two feet from land. The incoming wavelets washed over him. Too cold. That water is too damned cold. When I took sailing lessons the man at Anchor Marine said we don't worry about getting to people if they capsize but in May we worry about getting to them soon enough. The water is very cold. I went down along the rocks to where the bird was, waded out and got it, set it up on the shore. The second bird had made it but he too had collapsed at the first touch of ground, of rock. I moved him up into the sun. They'd dry out, their hearts would slow down, they'd rest and then right themselves. Wrong. Within an hour they were both dead. I came back to check and was only yards away when one of them gave a last twitch, its feet clenched in the air. Should I have put them in a shoe box with soft cloths? Stuffed them down my shirt and cupped them to me for warmth? When my father died after a first heart attack that came out of nowhere, the doctor, a noted heart specialist in New York, said to me, "I'm very sorry. I haven't lost one in a long time." It must have bothered him a while. I couldn't put those fledglings out of my mind. They stayed there, in the front of my head. There was no dislodging them, as when a tune gets in there and goes on playing by itself. The moment you stop doing something you hear it, going on. —*Kenneth Lash*

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"Mr. Notley said that the only point he would make here (and he did not intend to move an amendment) was that one of the areas they should be looking at was in parts of Canada where there wasn't economic opportunity. As a region in the country doing well financially, they could, in fact, be looking at an emphasis on investment in the Atlantic region or those parts of the country that are less fortunate, i.e. Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec.

The Chairman wondered if they should be saying: 'loan this Province some, loan another Province that . . . .' "

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Alberta Legislative Assembly, Proceedings, November 3, 1977

"You're an American, aren't you?" She handed the man a copy of *Heavy Construction News and Oilweek*.

"Yes, I am. I'm from Minnesota."

"Welcome to the Pipeline Show. Look around. There's a lot of interesting exhibits here. And I always tell all you Americans, when you get back home, tell your friends about what you saw up here. I don't know why it is, but Americans do not know anything about Canada. Why, when I watch the TV here I get all the news from the States, but when I go down to Billings with my husband and we watch the American TV, they don't have any news on about Canada at all. Why is that?"

Incident at the Pipeline Show, Exhibition Grounds, Edmonton, Alberta, June 6, 1979

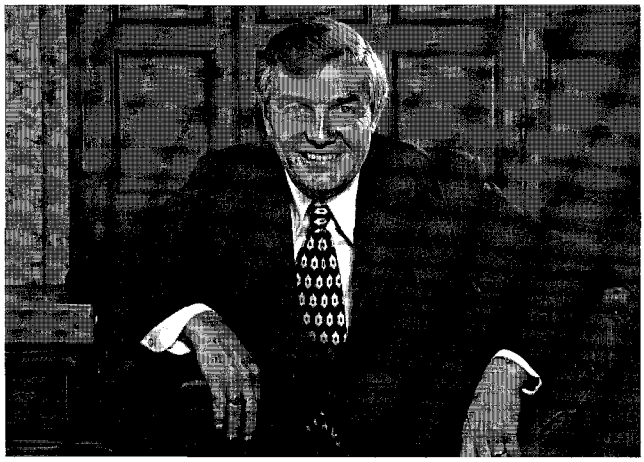
ALBERTA

POWER

A Report on Alberta by Leo J. Hertzel

ALBERTA

While most of Canada flounders in a cold economic slush, facing harsh inflation and chilling unemployment, the province of Alberta prospers like no other comparable geographic area in North America. In Edmonton, Vegreville, Calgary, Cold Lake, Red Deer, Fort McMurray, Banff, Lethbridge, the way of life for most Albertans includes as a matter of course (nearly) everything money can buy. "Alberta already has the most for the least," said an editorial in the Calgary *Herald* early this year. "The highest level of service but the lowest taxes, lowest fuel costs, lowest liquor prices . . . ." Alberta has no sales tax, no inheritance tax, the lowest rate of unemployment in Canada. The government provides Albertans with all medical care. There is a broad offering of social, educational and cultural services. The career development program, for example, offers heavy assistance to any Albertan who wants to change and improve jobs. The province supports technical and medical research and has become an international center for petroleum technology, for cancer research. Even the arts now prosper here with government help. "Where else in Canada—where else anywhere—is there such a proliferation of the arts in every form, in an area with a population of one and a half million?" wrote Dr. David Leighton, Director of the Banff Center, an internationally famous School of Fine Arts, Environmental Studies and Management.



(Above) Alberta's Premier Peter Lougheed, a Harvard-trained administrator who, in his youth, played football for a time with the Edmonton Eskimos. Once asked if he had ambitions to go to Ottawa, Lougheed replied: "Why would I want to run Canada when I already run Alberta?" (Left) The Edmonton skyline; oil storage tanks are reminders of the source of Alberta's great wealth.

Not every citizen of Alberta is wealthy, of course. But there is work for everyone and money in abundance to reward the work. One in every ten employed Albertans earned $35,000 or more last year. *Maclean's* magazine recently pictured suburban life in Calgary with guest rooms showing four-thousand-dollar bath tubs. "To enjoy is to equip a house with, say, seven or even nine bathrooms, a perhaps Freudian obsession in a society so recently removed from the frontier." Across the plains, Alberta's cities rise and glow, new centers of warmth and wealth and power in a land once known chiefly for its loneliness and its brutal cold.

In truth, Alberta is very rich and it plans on getting richer. During the past fiscal year the treasury had a 1.6 billion dollar surplus. (During the same period, Ontario had a 1.5 billion deficit.) While 1.6 billion Canadian dollars is not a staggering sum when considered in relation to the over-all U.S. economy (those who enjoy unlikely comparisons may note that U.S. citizens will spend about twice this much this year just on back yard swimming pools and accessories), it is substantial for a province with fewer than two million people. The entire budget of the state of Montana, the adjoining political entity to the south of Alberta, is only about one-half of Alberta's surplus for the year.

"The oil and gas industry has been a prime factor in the dramatic economic growth experienced by Alberta since the second world war," says a government report.

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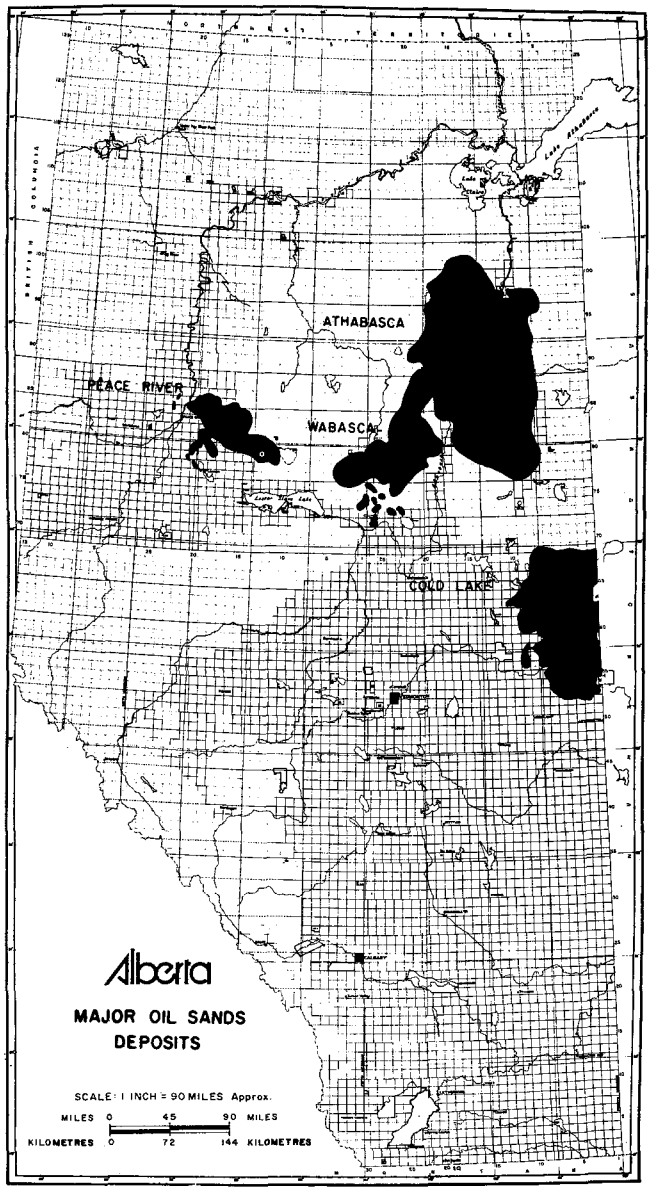

Beginning about 1947, oil and gas sales transformed the province from a rural frontier land to a major center of economic and political power. Albertans before 1947 were mostly farmers. Now, seventy-five percent of all Albertans live in the cities. Edmonton and Calgary, a few years back considered banished bush towns even by citizens of lonely Winnipeg, are now rich and sophisticated centers, the envy of much of Canada.

Americans have never been very good at geography, even the geography of North America. (In contrast, the English seem all to know the world, perhaps because they once nearly owned it.) Not so very many Americans can find even old-time major Canadian cities like Vancouver or Ottawa on a map without diligent search. How many Americans can quickly find Edmonton? Medicine Hat?

Many Albertans believe that Americans cannot long continue to misplace Alberta. They believe that the circumstances that have cast Alberta into the midst of riches will improve and that Alberta's power and influence in the affairs of North America will increase. If it does not come to a time when the entire continent revolves on a hub that is Alberta, at least the province will be very nearly the center of power. One person who believes is Mel Hurtig, president of Hurtig Publishers, one of the most successful publishing companies in western Canada. Hurtig believes absolutely in the future of Alberta. He has some doubts about the future of Canada.

I talked with Hurtig on an afternoon in early June. We met in a small office in his publishing plant tucked just underneath the north ramp of a viaduct that crosses railroad tracks that cut near downtown Edmonton. The office was Spartan-western: a desk and chair for Hurtig, a chair or two for visitors, a coffee maker on a table near the window looking out on the street, some cases and cabinets lined with Hurtig books. From behind the office toward the back of the long building came the muffled clatter of machines making books.

The temperature outside that day was nearly 60° fahrenheit, a warm time after an unusually severe winter. Hurtig was wearing a yellow golf sweater and sports slacks. He was muscular, tanned, wiry, a compact man who looked to be in his early forties, graying hair cut short. Like nearly everyone I talked to in Edmonton that week, Hurtig seemed wound up, energized, anxious for the next project. Our conversation was interrupted four times in less than one hour by persons telephoning Hurtig and wanting to play golf.

Hurtig talked very fast, jumping from topic to topic in a pattern he controlled. "I'll tell you how to talk about Alberta—power; power and youth. Those are the words. Alberta is going to exert enormous power in the near future, not only in Canadian politics but throughout the whole western hemisphere . . . . This is a young country. There are still people here who remember being chased by Indians. We don't have a long past to hold us down. We've got a fresh start here. You look out that window and see all those shiny buildings on Jasper street and you hear about the big money up here, just remember it's not all money; it's a young country.

"You won't understand what I mean now, but in the near future Canada is going to be in a very serious economic depression. And so will the States. Because of great stupidity—oh, the really great stupidity of your energy policies like your failure to develop the Colorado oil shale, not developing your own resources when you could, letting your energy be controlled by the Arabs and the international oil people, so Alberta is going to get a lot richer. We have oil in the ground and the oil sands and water. Everybody wants the oil and the U.S. is going to need the water. You'll need huge amounts of water to get at that oil in the Colorado shale, get it out, and there's nowhere for it to come from but North. There's going to be a big demand for water. We have what everybody wants."

An assistant came into the office with a problem: book inventories in Toronto. Hurtig got up abruptly and walked out of the room. When he returned ten minutes later he took up where he had left off.

"You won't understand what I mean, but in Canada there is more and more a shift toward power in the provinces. An American governor would be amazed at the power a provincial premier already has, and the premiers' powers are going to get bigger . . . . Of course, there is a

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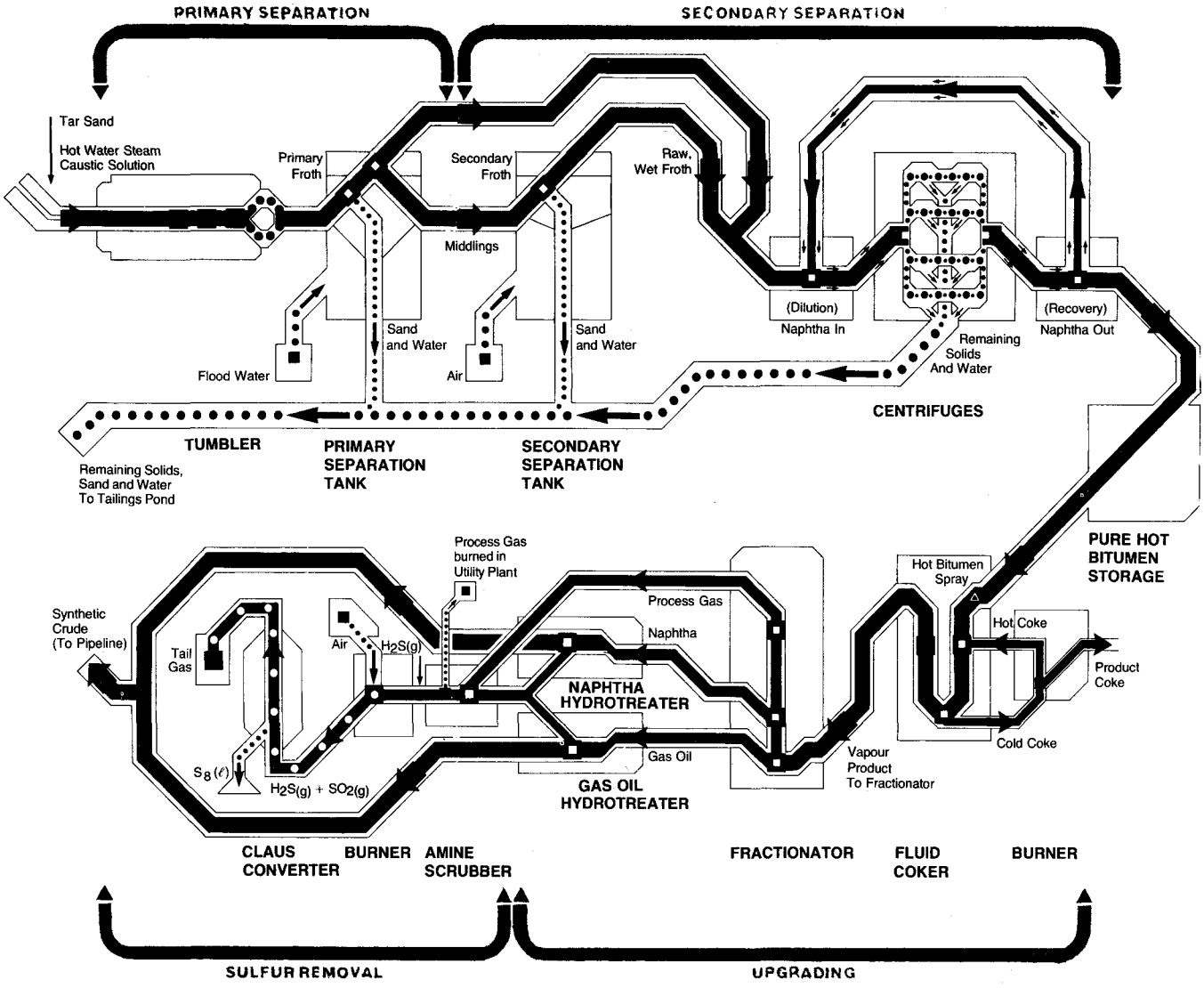

(Left) Major oil sands deposits are located in the Cold Lake, Athabasca, and Peace River areas over two-hundred miles north of Edmonton. Some oil industry engineers believe the tar sands contain enough recoverable oil to supply the needs of the North American continent for at least one-hundred years. Extraction of the thick, tar-like bitumen from the sands that hold it is a complex process beginning with hot water and steam. The diagram (above) is a simplified chart of the steps in the process from tar sand to synthetic crude.

chance that Canada will survive, but only a chance. If Quebec splits, everything will probably come apart. Out here in the west we've never been too happy with the arrangement anyway. Listen, there is a good chance now that new political entities will emerge. And whatever happens, Alberta is going to be at the center of things. You won't understand what I mean when I say this, but the center of power in Canada is shifting west."

Although Hurtig's judgments seem oversimplified to some people, Hurtig is not a fanatic. He is a man who knows a great deal about Canada and his opinions are respected. A liberal in a nominally conservative province, Hurtig this year went east to deliver the keynote speech to the annual convention of the liberal party of Ontario. He is proud that the speech, a heavily documented plea for Canadians to reduce dependence on foreign investment, was eventually printed in a national Canadian business magazine.

What Hurtig relies on for the growing power of Alberta is the richness of its natural wealth. Oil and gas pipelines from Alberta extend eastward, southward, and westward to supply central Canada, part of British Columbia, and a substantial (though diminishing) portion of the United States with energy. Daily production of crude oil and natural gas liquids now averages well over one million barrels for an annual production total of around 450 million barrels. This produces a great deal of both public and private wealth for the province. The sale of crude oil, natural gas, and related products two years ago brought nearly 8 billion dollars to the province; government direct revenues from the sales were well over 2 billion. And the price of oil has risen dramatically since then.

About 87% of all proven recoverable crude oil in the ground in Canada is in Alberta; about the same percentage of natural gas is there. Pumping these stocks at a rate of a million barrels a day, the province can expect to maintain

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significant production at least through 1990. After that, some government sources believe that production (and thus income) must diminish significantly. The matter is debated, though, because some oil people hold that new finds in recent years promise heavy production on through 1999, perhaps even beyond.

But whatever the future of conventional oil and gas production in Alberta may be, Hurtig and many others like him are confident that prosperity will be maintained and then raised to even greater heights by the incredible riches in the tar sands. The Athabasca tar sands stretch over an area of about 12,000 square miles around Fort McMurray, a city 265 miles north of Edmonton. One petroleum publication describes the potential in the sands by saying they "contain enough recoverable oil to supply the entire North American continent for at least the next century." Another petroleum journal places the ultimate yield of the deposit at 250 billion barrels of synthetic crude. (The term "synthetic" is used by oil people to describe the bitumen or tar extracted from the deposits because the tar must go through an upgrading process in order to yield a product that can be easily transported to and utilized by refineries.) Simply described, the sands are huge deposits of an asphalt-like material composed of sand, heavy oil, clay and water. Separating the oil from the other materials, however, is not a simple process.

The riches of the tar sands and their meaning for the future of Alberta are intriguing subjects for Albertans. In 1978, J. Joseph Fitzgerald, with help from the provincial government, published a kind of tar sands primer, *Black Gold with Grit*. He described what 250 billion barrels of oil might mean when translated into a different form of energy.

> Using a well-head price for oil of $8.50 a barrel, the projected 250 billion barrels of synthetic crude would bring $2,125,000,000,000 . . . . If the yield of the oil sands were to be sold consistently at the rate of only $8.50, and if the total revenue could be divided among the people of Canada, the value would amount to about $100,000 a head. If Alberta were, like Saudi Arabia, a country separate from Canada, this sale would amount to well over $1 million for each of the 1.8 million Albertans.

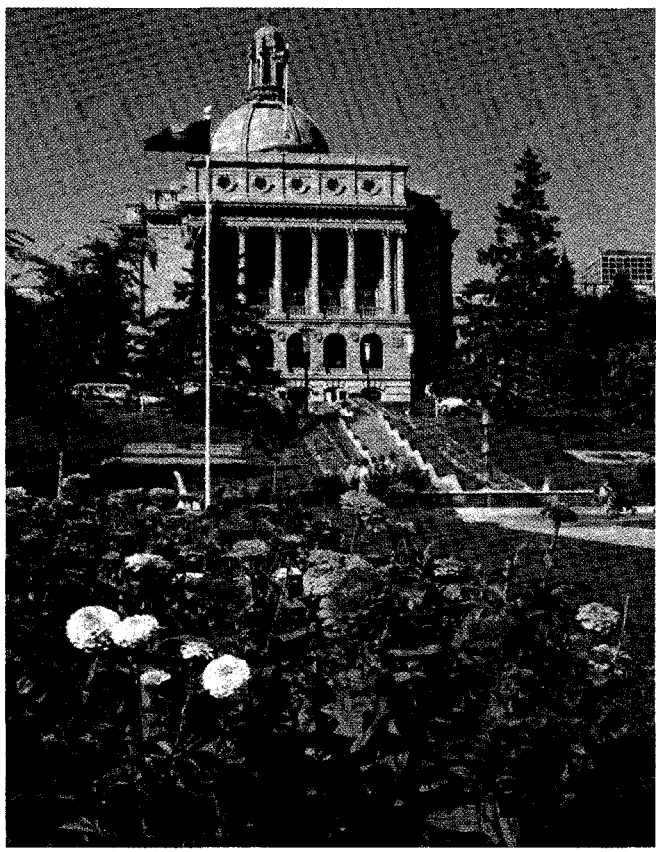
Since Fitzgerald wrote those words, the price of oil has more than doubled.

But recovery of oil from the sands which trap and hold it is both difficult and expensive. In 1976 Larry Pratt, a professor of political science at the University of Alberta, wrote a book on oil sands and the politics of oil, *The Tar Sands*. The book was published by Hurtig Publishing and it contains the following caution:

> To recover and develop even a small fraction of the total oil will be extremely expensive, time-consuming and will involve massive environmental disturbance. Bitumen in the ground is not gas in the tank by a long shot. A great deal of inflated and overly zealous rhetoric about the size of oil sands reserves has already inspired an irresponsible attitude towards the development process.

So Fitzgerald's fantasy of every Albertan a millionaire and Hurtig's hopes of quick power may take some time. Yet the hopes are not to be ridiculed. There has been progress with oil sands recovery since Pratt's book appeared, and production from the sands has already begun on a limited scale. Syncrude, a corporation made up of four oil companies, the province of Alberta, and the government of Canada, already has production facilities in operation around Fort McMurray. Syncrude hopes to be extracting about 125,000 barrels a day within eighteen months, maybe two years. Alsands, a consortium of nine oil companies, intends to commence construction of a production facility in the Athabasca region in 1980 with production of oil commencing by 1986.

Projects like Alsands and Syncrude require tremendous sums of money for initial construction and ongoing support long before any production begins. Much (though not all) of that investment comes into the province from outside, adding more wealth to the already burgeoning Alberta economy. Alsands, for example, already calculates its Albertan investment will be in the billions of dollars. "The cost of bringing the Alsands Project on stream will total $4.9 billion in as-spent dollars," says an Alsands brochure. "The project will have a total Canadian economic impact of 43.7 billion over a 25 year life." Most



Photos: Alberta's Legislative Building (right). Alberta became a province of Canada in 1905; the legislative building was completed for use in 1912. One Canadian journalist has commented that the building today "has imperial pretensions." (Page 17, bottom) Prairie Oil Rig. More than 90% of the oil in Canada lies under the prairies of Alberta. (Top) An overview of modern Edmonton; the legislative building can be seen in the foreground.

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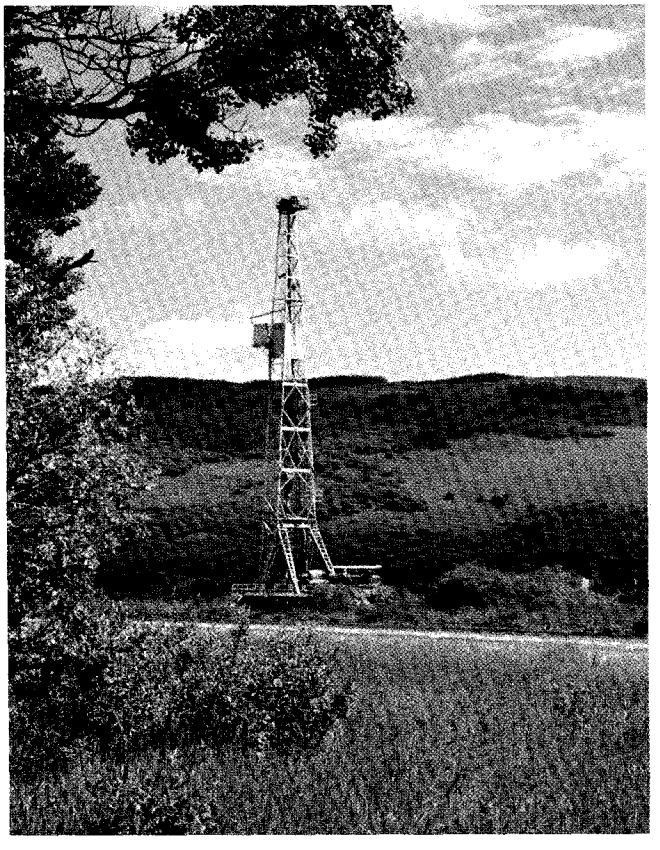
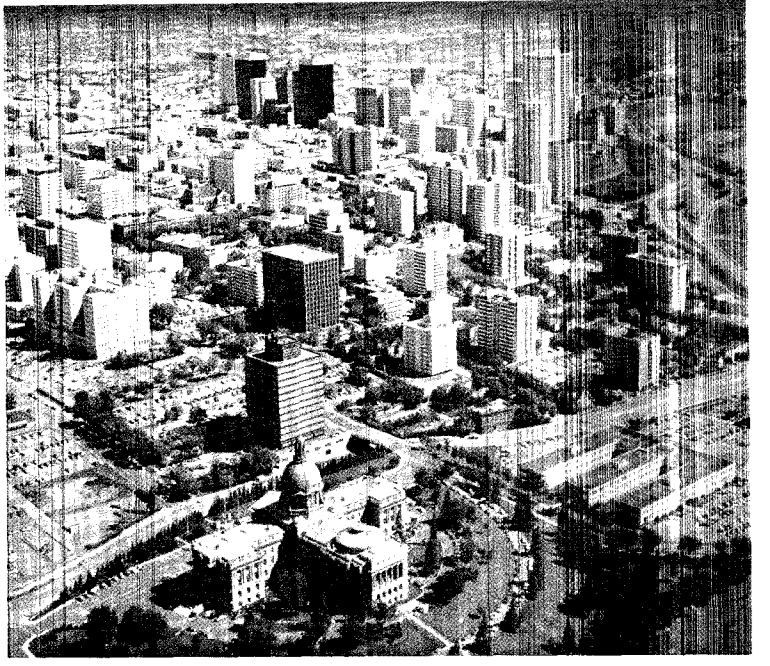
of those billions of dollars will circulate in Alberta. (Some critics of the way oil investments have developed in Alberta claim the province eventually loses a great deal because of the heavy foreign investments in Alberta oil. They feel that the province, by giving outsiders tax credits and special considerations to induce investments, trades away much of its rightful wealth. Larry Pratt is one such critic.)

Calgary and Edmonton, the two largest cities in Alberta, have benefitted enormously from the incoming oil money. During the past ten years it has changed nearly everything in the two cities. Edmonton, the capital, is located near the center of the province. Most energy producing facilities feed in and out of the city and it serves as a staging ground for nearly all of the tar sands operations. Calgary to the south has become, among many other things, a financial center. A year ago, a writer for *Canadian Forum* described one aspect of the new Calgary.

> Once merely a hinterland service center, Calgary is fast replacing Montreal as Canada's second largest financial center (behind Toronto) and now ranks behind Houston and London as a world capital for oil finance and the location of several hundred head offices.

The new Edmonton is a city of strange contrasts and furious activity. From the International Airport twenty miles away, the skyline of Edmonton hovers over the flat earth like a prairie mirage. A mirage-like blending of metropolitan sophistication and prairie flatness continues on into the very heart of the city. "In booming Edmonton," wrote a columnist for *Maclean's*, "so many faces on the street are square and rough, so many parkas and tough boots remind the visitor that frontier and bush and farm are still close." The parkas and the boots and overalls and fine stripe business suits and modest slit skirts with soft leather bags "like butter" move along the streets near old gray two story frame stores with billboards on top—EXPORT "A" BIG FLAVOUR—mid-rise apartment buildings, high rise office buildings, holes in the ground with foundations going in, luxury hotels with deep stone entrances like caves, arctic outfitters with heavy gear on display, squat branch banks, glassy furniture stores showing king-size waterbeds under huge red velvet canopies, theatres, second-hand porno stores with crumpled girlie magazines in the windows, souvenir shops selling Edmonton Eskimo official caps for $7.95 and desk sets made of a pen holder surrounded by little vials of crude and refined oil, little plastic capsules full of tar sand.





There are many drunks on the streets. Morning and night alike they weave through the crowds, thin men in overalls and FORD or HUSKY caps, heavy men with black beards halting people and asking for money. Over in front of the Beaver House three men sit playing something like mumblety-peg with a long knife, square brown faces and plaid cotton shirts, Indians who seem absolutely indifferent to the crowds hurrying around them.

On Jasper street, novelty stores with window displays of plastic beer mugs shaped like women's breasts and ash trays shaped like toilet bowls (PUT YOUR ASH HERE!) stand next to import shops with armor from Spain, rugs from Iran, plumbing accessory outlets, fur salons with modest window cards "Trade in your old furs this year", shadowy men's stores with windows full of wool. Along the street the restaurants are as varied as those on Vancouver's *Robsonstrasse*: a Greek restaurant with belly dancers, JUMBO Chinese restaurant where waiters wear black formal dress and serve a menu of true Szechwan dishes, a subdued Hungarian restaurant with a carefully limited list of entrees, a Mexican place with chicken mole.

The Edmonton Art Gallery at 2 Sir Winston Churchill Square is a two story, squared structure, light cream. Squared stone, glass. Inside the space is irregular, a stone staircase rising to the second floor. The feeling is open, space. The second floor gallery rooms with high, bright

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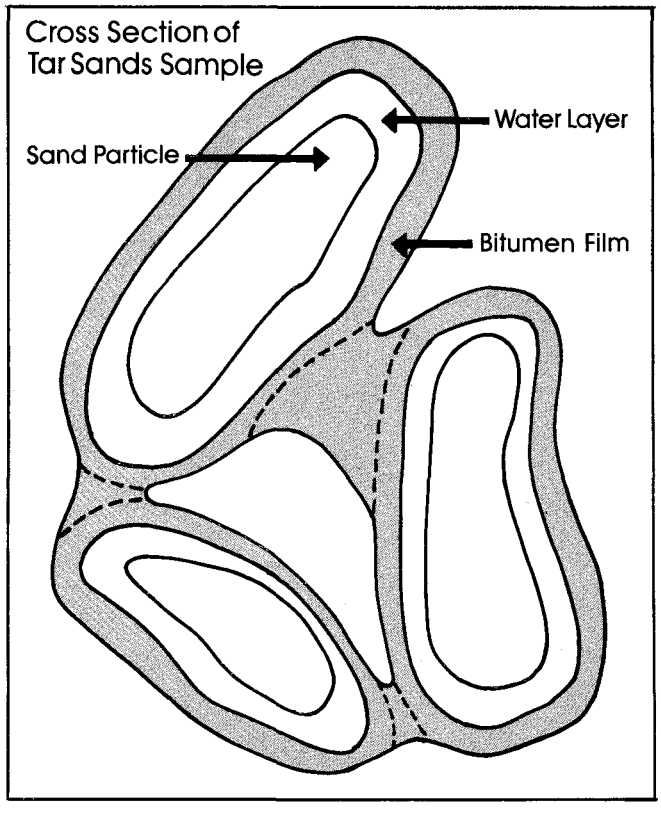
walls are somehow so filled with light the walls diminish the hanging prints. Inside Gallery 2 a group of small children, fourth graders perhaps, fidget on the floor in front of an exhibit, Prairie Printmakers. A young woman, black hair pulled back, wearing a gray knee-length wool skirt, Junior League art volunteer pattern, walks back and forth in front of the children talking loudly at them. Her voice carries and bounces off the bright walls of all the galleries on the floor. "Now what do we know about texture? Texture?"

Down the hall, E.J. Bellocq's Storyville Portraits hang all around one bright room—one line of photographs, dark rectangles hanging around the four light grain yellow walls. Bellocq's prostitutes look out across the room, each at a sister on the opposite wall, posing, comfortable, some wearing black masks, some wearing nothing at all. The fancy New Orleans bordellos with the tassels and the long couches with conchoid legs now to be seen here in this clean wheat white and squared yellow gallery up north. Four boys crash into the room, fourteen year olds, maybe fifteen, boys just horsing around. They fall into the gallery and all four momentarily stop and stare at a Bellocq whore, her pubic hair gleaming black, her white belly balloon-round and large. The boys are apprehensive. They begin to shove one another. They squeal like girls. *Look at this one.* One boy stumbles to the floor, laughing in a high excited whine, a whinny. Another boy reaches down and slaps him hard across the rump.

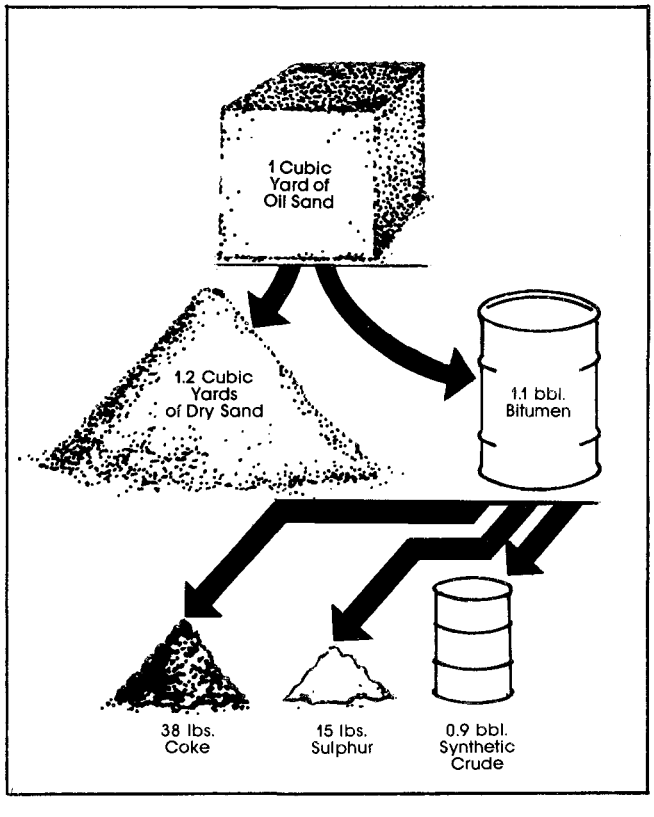
Around Edmonton Plaza, doormen in authentic scarlet Beefeater costumes wait with deference before massive stone entrances to the most expensive hotels.

"I'm from down south of Calgary," the woman said. She spoke with a distinct Irish accent. "I came up to Edmonton looking for work. First day up here I got this job in this grill, no trouble at all. Plenty of work here in Edmonton. I guess I do talk like the Irish, see this Irishman lived with my mother on the reservation for years before he finally took off and left her. But I speak Blackfoot. I think in Blackfoot. My children, though, they don't speak it but they understand when I speak it to them. They don't want to learn it, though. They think it's funny to see an Indian speaking Indian. I don't. I wish they'd learn it. Blackfoot language isn't written, did you know that? I wish it was written. But there's a radio station in Calgary broadcasts in Blackfoot every Sunday morning at 7:00 a.m. Crees and Blackfeet don't like each other, did you know that? They fight on the street.

"No, I don't know anything about any money from oil helping me out or my kids. If there's a lot of money I sure never saw any of it. There is a lot of work though, I'll say that. Another thing, on the reservation we don't pay taxes. And they pay my medicare. If I'm on the reservation, they pay all my medicare, all my prescriptions. I've heard if they find oil on your land that they'll pay for it . . . I own a little farm down there."



Mel Hurtig had said youth was one thing to keep in mind about Alberta. The idea that youth is the key to the province is popular. "The thing about Alberta in general and Edmonton in particular is the energy, the fantastic youthful energy of this place," a government official told me. "When you get off the airplane here you notice it right away. Everybody is young and things are happening.



(Above) Cross-section of tar sands sample. One cubic yard of the sands yields slightly less than a barrel of synthetic crude (below). The Alsands group (right) is a consortium of nine oil companies organized to produce synthetic crude from the tar sands around Fort McMurray, 265 miles north of Edmonton.

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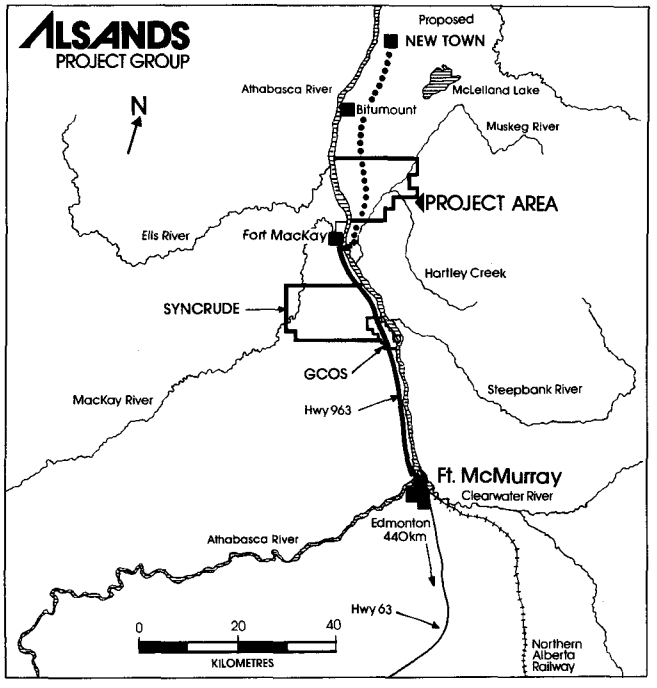
You know right away you're in Edmonton, like the way you know you're in New York when you get there. There's a different feeling here. You can't keep still. You get here one day and the next morning you move faster. The human energy here is fantastic."

With all of the wealth and energy, Edmonton grows. On the outskirts of the city, utility crews lay pipe along the highway on out into the country, yellow bulldozers and welding trucks and cranes ceaselessly dig out the limits of the city. In the center of Edmonton, buildings rise through the day and half way into the night. Down the hill from the legislative building huge sections of concrete drain pipe are being lowered into a raw hole in the red earth. Across the street behind the twin Petroleum Towers, the South Tower and the North Tower, a matching set of towers is rising, tower for tower. Eight story hoists raise prefab sections of white concrete facing from flatbed trucks that line the curb, creep forward, empty, leave immediately for another load. At 6:30 p.m. on a late day in June, the sky will be light for hours this far north; just up from the old Disco Shoe Store and Audrey Book Store (Robert W. Service in stock), one entire quarter block has been scooped out, a deep hole surrounded by street level wooden walls with peep holes for watchers. Far below the surface level, men stoop smoothing fresh cement, the beginnings of a foundation. Overhead cranes swing back and forth settling in cable and forms. The pattern is repeated perhaps ten times, a dozen, in an eight or nine block stretch. All around town in the early evening light, workers in hard hats and rolled up sleeves are setting forms, smoothing fresh cement. There are cranes and compressors at every intersection.



All of this energy and contrast and wealth is held together from the legislative building, a domed, stone, Roman-like structure that sits on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River not far from the center of Edmonton. At night the dome glows with a faint rose-yellow light which caused one eastern journalist to write, " . . . it could fit into a minor European capital" and then add perhaps with some uneasiness, "It has imperial pretensions. The building on the bank of the Saskatchewan wants to be more important than it is." Peter Lougheed, Premier of Alberta, expresses that ambition in a slightly different fashion. "Historically, Albertans have not felt that their interests and concerns have been adequately accommodated within the present federal system. They sense that their accomplishments and aspirations, both individual and collective, have been frustrated by the historic concentration of economic decision-making in the so-called 'golden triangle' centered in Toronto and also restricted and obstructed by so-called 'national policies' emanating from Ottawa." It is Hurtig's warning of "new political entities" with a proper golden glow.

Lougheed, who comes from a wealthy Alberta family, is a competitive and ambitious leader immensely popular with the citizens of the province. He studied law at the University of Alberta, played football for the Edmonton Eskimos, studied business administration at Harvard. In 1971, as leader of the conservative party, he won control of the province. He has increased his hold steadily with an aggressive, some say prescient government. He has used the province's growing wealth to make Alberta's standard of living the highest in Canada, to make Alberta the financial and technological center of the nation. In the 1979 election, Lougheed's party won 74 out of 79 seats.

Although nominally a conservative pledged to free enterprise, Lougheed has used some of the provincial wealth to move into areas usually thought to belong to private business. Alberta purchased and runs Pacific Western Airlines in order to control a significant part of its own transportation system rather than having that system controlled by "interests in the East." Alberta has joined private oil companies in investing in the Syncrude project. It now appears that Lougheed is working to obtain for the province an access to the sea through the Mackenzie Valley to the Arctic. Right now one observer characterizes the province as ". . . a musclebound Switzerland. She aims to do something." Interestingly, these moves by the province are often discussed as actions to "extend security."

Three years ago Lougheed and the legislature established the now famous Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Along with Margaret Trudeau's disco nights and the possibility of Quebec going down, the Fund has become the most widely talked about issue in recent Canadian history.

In the words of Alberta Treasurer Merv Leitch, the purpose of the Fund is "to set aside for the future benefit of Albertans a significant portion of the revenues now being received from the sale of the province's non-renewable natural resources." In less formal words, the Fund prepares for the needs of the province when and if the oil income runs out. It is a huge cushion of money to insure that Alberta will never be hit with a bust after its present boom.

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On August 30, 1976, the province transferred 1.5 billion Canadian dollars from general funds to the account of the Heritage Fund. That was just a start. From that day onward, 30% of all revenues from non-renewable resources (mostly the oil and gas) go into the Fund "to be invested and saved for Albertans in the future." The 30% amounted to $620 million in 1977, $922 million in 1978.* By early 1978, the Fund already listed its total assets at $3,367 million; by early 1979, the total was over $4 billion. By the year 1990, perhaps the year of the beginning of the decline in oil revenues, the Fund will be at least $18 billion and most probably a very great deal more.

The Fund is designed to achieve its goal of security for the future through three functions:

> Improve the quality of life in the province by undertaking projects which will provide long-term social and economic benefits to Albertans;
>
> Expand and diversify the economic base of the province to ensure that new jobs and opportunities will always be available;
>
> Provide investment income and capital to be used in the event provincial revenues decline.

In operation, the Fund is separated into three working divisions: Capital Project Division, Canada Investment Division, Alberta Investment Division. Each of these divisions manages the investment of funds in specified areas. Money not invested through these divisions—surplus cash—is simply invested in marketable securities and deposits.

Capital projects activities provide long-term economic or social benefits to Albertans. Projects supported under this general goal need not yield immediate returns, though some do through quality-of-life improvement projects. Investments by capital projects are limited to 20% of the total amount in the Fund; up to now the percentage has not actually gone above about 5%. Investments by capital projects are the only investments by the Fund that are directly determined and controlled by the legislature, a fact that has great political importance not only in Alberta but in all of Canada.

Medical research and medical services have been heavy benefitters from capital projects, although this portion of the Fund is probably best understood as a kind of legislative cookie jar holding many different kinds of cookies. During the first two years of operation of the Fund, capital projects invested about $27 million in the Alberta Children's Provincial General Hospital in Calgary. In addition, cancer and heart disease research and treatment facilities that "emphasize the physical, psychological, and social components of care" also did well. Capital projects supported irrigation projects, reforestation projects, land reclamation projects, and oil sands technology research. The oil sands research is done through an authority or provincial entity known as AOSTRA. AOSTRA works as a coordinating body with industry, universities, and private scientists to develop technology to improve the recovery of bitumen from the tar sands.

Capital projects also invested in lakes, trail systems, interpretive centers throughout the province. It spent money to improve the 3,000 acre Capital City Recreation Park in Edmonton—hiking, cycling, picnicking. It spent money on the 2,920 acre Fish Creek Provincial Park in south Calgary—cycling, hiking, fishing. (Generally, whatever Edmonton gets, Calgary gets one too, a rule that also works the other way around.)

Although capital projects works to improve the quality of life in Alberta, none of its money has been used so far for what could strictly be called cultural projects. Parks or boating facilities have been heavily supported but pure cultural activities (opera, dance) have not. There are flourishing cultural and arts projects in Alberta, but they are mostly supported from provincial general funding. The distinction between recreation (Heritage Fund support) and culture (general funding support) is a tricky one. I asked Horst Schmid, Minister of Culture and one of the most popular men in Alberta, how the province draws the line, how do you tell where recreation ends and culture begins? "It's not always easy, you know," he said. "We're still trying to make the decision right. I'll give you an example: what's figure skating? After a lot of talk we decided, for the time being at least, that figure skating is cultural. Regular skating is recreation. It doesn't make too much difference to us, though. The province supports them both, but from different pockets."

Nevertheless, some citizens in Alberta would like to see the Heritage Fund acknowledge that culture does relate to "quality of life" and then spend some money on its support. But the real problem with that course is simply that capital projects is controlled by the legislature and the legislature is sensitive to public pressure. Culture just doesn't exert much pressure on the legislature even though the arts do seem to grow like the wheat on the plains. "The trouble with artists is they don't have any political clout," the director of one provincial cultural project told me. We talked in his corner office 11 stories up in the new CN building. Through the windows behind him I could see across the river, past the homes in the old residential areas, on to the flatness of the horizon. "Artists don't get in on the Heritage Fund because they aren't the kinds of people who know how to exert pressure on the legislature. Hell, I have artists come in here wanting help and they don't even have social security cards. They claim they're not interested in social security. That's okay for them, I guess, but that attitude is not going to get culture into the Fund."

Probably the division of the Fund that has attracted most attention in Canada the past two years is the Canada Investment Division. According to the Fund's 1978 report, this division provides "capital for programmes or projects undertaken or supported by provincial governments in Canada or the federal government." In other words, the Canada division is the agency through which Alberta lends money directly to other governing bodies in Canada. As yet, this division too is small, about the size of the capital division investment. But the future of Canada division is the single most interesting item in the project to guess about. Who in Canada gets a loan from Alberta next?

*Figures are in Canadian dollars.

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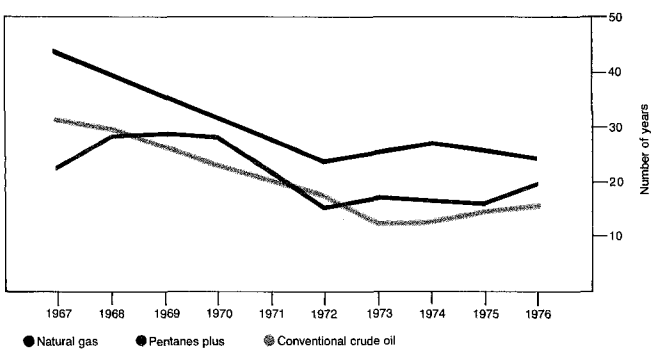
By mid-1979 the Canada division had made loans to four provinces: Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia. The loans were modest, 47 million to New Brunswick, 50 million to Newfoundland. But these loans are just beginnings. There will be many more in the future. How much of Canada will eventually find itself in debt to Alberta is the key question when discussions begin on the way power is moving from east to west these days.

It is not only transactions of the Canada division that cause financial seers to measure the power Alberta wields with its money. A huge portion of the Heritage Fund is invested in marketable securities and deposits, mostly Canadian. This investment reached $2,009 million at the end of 1978 and grows daily. Much of this money is invested in Government of Canada, provincial and provincially guaranteed debentures. Early, this portion of the Fund was mostly in short term debentures, but "At one point we were so big we were moving the market and affecting its stability," said a Treasury Department manager. "So we asked for permission to buy longer-term securities." The influence this part of the Fund alone exerts on Canada's economy is enormous. Speaking to a Petroleum Society meeting in Calgary in early 1979, Dr. Verne Atrill, a professor of economics and an Alberta watcher, said that if things continue with these investments Alberta might eventually govern all of Canada. "The dependence of the federal government on the Alberta Heritage Trust Fund is awesome," he said. "While fund officials aren't necessarily buying federal government bonds, they are buying bonds backed by the federal government . . ." This kind of statement helps to explain a remark Lougheed made in 1976: "Why would I want to run Canada when I already run Alberta?"

The third section of the Fund, the Alberta Investment Division, comprises about 30% of the total Fund. This division aims at strengthening and diversifying the economy of Alberta while simultaneously returning a profit to the Fund. Money from this division has gone into provincial housing programs. It has gone into utilities. This is the section of the Fund that owns the province's 10% equity in Syncrude. This is the section of the Fund that has been used when Lougheed and his cabinet choose to move the province into areas of private business.

All of the money in the Fund except for the relatively small capital projects division is controlled directly by Peter Lougheed and his cabinet. The cabinet acts as an "investment committee" in running the Fund. The Premier chairs the committee and the provincial treasurer is vice-chairman. Traditions of cabinet solidarity and confidentiality are upheld; roll calls of ministers' votes are not made public. From time to time the legislature has tried to gain some control of investment decisions but it has had no success. Lougheed is secure in his popularity.

LIFE INDICES OF CONVENTIONAL CRUDE OIL, NATURAL GAS, AND PENTANES PLUS



From *Industry and Resources 78-79* Government of Alberta

Holding power over such a large amount of money in a nation faced with grave financial problems, Lougheed is in a position almost daily to determine national policies of the highest importance. The government of Canada is quite understandably uncomfortable with this situation. "As Alberta has gained in wealth, power and population—1,300 newcomers arrive in an average month—it has challenged federal government positions," is the careful way a federal government publication described the situation this spring.

Fiscal experts all across Canada would like to advise Alberta on how to invest its money. Canadian financial journals are full of articles on the past, present, and future of the Fund. So anxious are some eastern finance people to get their hands on a part of the Fund, any part of the Fund, that from time to time someone from the east makes a few friends in Calgary or Edmonton by assuring the Albertans that no one really wants to get hands into the Fund pie. "Eastern Canadians don't stand on street corners plotting to steal Alberta's Heritage Trust Fund," the Chairman of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce said to a Calgary audience early this year. "Albertans are getting a distorted view of what's happening in the East about this matter." Comforting as the message was, it is doubtful that many Albertans were convinced.

Around Alberta supper tables and at Alberta cocktail parties one of the favorite topics of conversation lately is what next should be done with the Heritage Fund money. Results of the discussions often show that the people are not entirely comfortable with their wealth; they are aware of how tempting all of this must be to the rest of Canada, indeed even to some of the neighbors to the south:

Editor
Edmonton *Sun* May 9, 1979

The Heritage Trust Fund should be spent on making us Albertans secure here—what about a small, but superbly trained army to make sure that what we've got stays with us?

Ben K. Pantel

On the other hand, other Albertans see some humor in their power.

Editor
Edmonton *Sun* Mar. 18, 1979

If the Lougheed government wants to do something truly memorable with the Heritage Fund, my answer is to buy California. . . .

Pat Marshall

(Part one of two parts. The conclusion will appear in the December NAR.)

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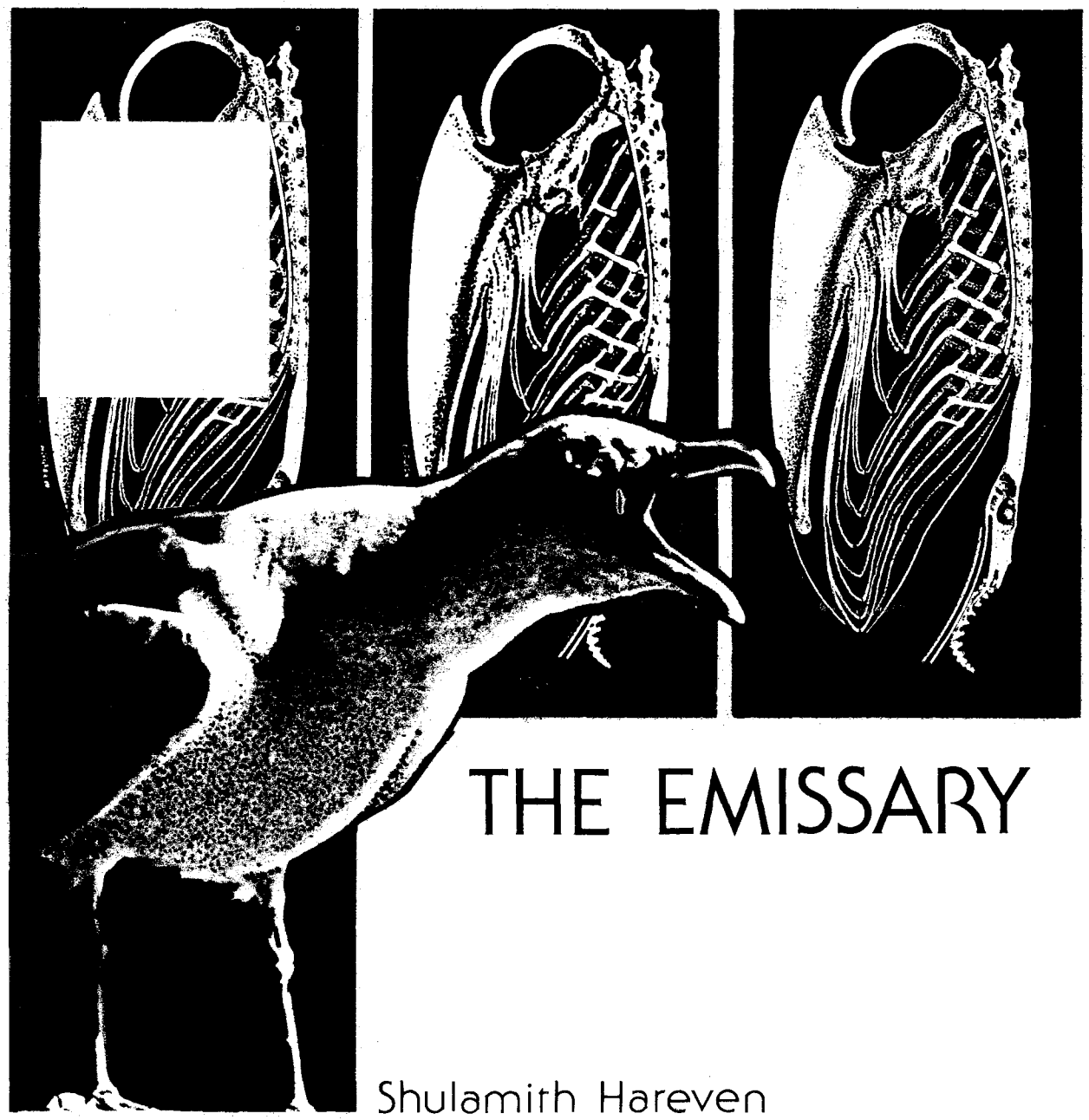

K. Dyble Thompson

THE EMISSARY

Shulamith Hareven

He came through the back door, weary and angry, even though I had opened the door before he rang. The truth is I had somehow expected him while drinking my coffee, in the vague knowledge that today it would happen again.

He came in like smoke, grey, somewhat stifling, with an unpleasant smell. His remaining hair was yellowish, like parched, abandoned stalks. He sat down on the kitchen chair without leaving hold of his open briefcase, into which he directed his anger.

"Well?" he said impatiently.

"For whom is it today?" I asked, defending myself by making conversation.

He made a disparaging gesture with his hand. A piece of cigarette paper clung to his mouth.

"Orphans from the Sahara. Well, give, come on—give."

I turned slowly to the wardrobe and with submissive hands took out several pairs of shoes. I held them out to him with bowed head, though I had no idea what orphans from the Sahara could do with my high-heeled shoes, which were no longer mine and perhaps never had been, having been lent me for that one evening, for that walk hand-in-hand in the street, for those slightly intoxicated hours, when I was not responsible either for my words, which became impertinent, or my hands, which came to life in a kind of movement of their own, while the heels drummed and soared.

He spat on the floor.

I went back to the wardrobe and selected a dress which had a stain. He fingered the cloth and found the stain at once.

"You, too," he rebuked me. "Just like the rest."

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"Perhaps the stain can be removed," I said. Unsmilingly he bared two rows of grey teeth. A profound weariness was reflected in his eyes, a sorrow intermittently replenished; he was like a boxer's old punching bag, still suffering blow after blow, still returning to the hand which struck it.

"A dress," he said bitterly, "a rag with a few threads, while *there*—do you want to me to tell you about it?"

I felt the tears brimming in my eyes even before he began. A curse has afflicted me since birth—call it empathy; for that reason there are some dreadful expressions I pretend not to hear: words like orphans, poverty, accident, bombs, or murder. But that morning he was merciless. He wiped his forehead with open, dirty palm, and said:

"Nuclear tests last year. They were born without . . ."

I blocked my ears so as not to hear, not with my hands but by a kind of faculty I have developed to make myself completely deaf, and knelt down beside the wardrobe drawer, choking back my tears. Time and again when he returned—from Asia, the North Pole, Honolulu, Timbuktu, and the jungles of Brazil—he would threaten me with his stories. And the terrible thing was that I guessed all of them, as if they came out of me. As if they *were* me.

I took out all my coats, and then added my stockings. He pushed me aside, went to the wardrobe and took out a striped, red-and-white skirt, which I used to wear only on mornings when I got up absolutely certain of triumph. I shared a secret with that skirt: it belonged entirely to me and I belonged entirely to it, in days of roaring light.

And now it was being pawed by the ugly, nail-bitten hands of the emissary.

"It's mine," I protested weakly, though I knew what his answer would be.

"Yours," he sneered and spat on the floor, "yours, you—rs."

I asked forgiveness from all my gods for committing the sin of self-adornment, the sin of arrogance. For hadn't I known all the time, all the time, even when wearing it, that it was not mine?—because nothing belongs to you in this world, not even your own body; and the exhilaration it used to arouse in me was but the sweetness of stolen waters, the joy of transgression, the pride of transient sin.

I wanted to give him the skirt myself, but before I could do so he had deposited it, crumpled, in his brief case, leaving me choking on chagrin and pride.

The emissary paid no more attention to me. He brusquely removed everything from the shelves: lingerie, cosmetics, all the contrivances of woman lurking in hiding, beckoning from the shelves, all the delusions of the great hope, all the little acts of creation compounding fantasy.

The wardrobe was now completely empty. He began pacing about the room, as though concluding a repulsive task, removed the roses from the vase and put them in his brief case, stripped off the sheets, leafed quickly through the books and took the best ones.

"What's that?" he suddenly asked, his sad, heart-rending eyes contemplating the housecoat I was wearing.

"A housecoat," I answered, "there's nothing else left."

He sank into the chair and didn't even get angry, just covered his eyes with his hand.

"In other words," he said slowly, "you're just as rotten as the rest."

I wasn't rotten. I didn't want to be rotten, to dole out pittances, to give in exact measure, like half an oath, half a fast, a divided city, like a broker forever multiplying and dividing. I didn't know how to be rotten, a kind of latent truth is always lurking in the air around me. And only terrifying expressions like orphans or nuclear tests can make it materialize and illuminate it around me. They were born without . . . and I was quibbling over a housecoat.

I undressed. I took a large plastic bag, in which I had once bought all the fruits of the season, and put it on. The red drawstring dangled slackly down, like a wound from my throat to the lower part of my stomach, but the wound did not hurt. The summer sun warmed my arms through the thin plastic. The roses, which were once mine, emitted perfume from the emissary's shabby brief case. I was glad they had left me their memory.

He suddenly turned his head to the wall, leaned his forehead on both clenched fists, and began to cry.

"If you knew," he said, "if you had seen what I saw there. It's incredible, it's incredible that man can do that to man—and to little children too."

I wanted to console him from the depths of my plastic, but I knew there was no consolation for him; that he carried all those things in his heart, bitter and alien.

He went out weeping into the street, and I stood beside the window warming myself in the transparent bag. It occurred to me that it resembled the bag of waters enclosing the fetus; and perhaps that was how it should be—it is always possible to be born.

The smell of monstrous pity remained in the empty room. □

(Translated, from the Hebrew, by David Weber)

SHULAMITH HAREVEN lives in Jerusalem. Her novel City of Many Days *was published in English by Doubleday in 1977.*

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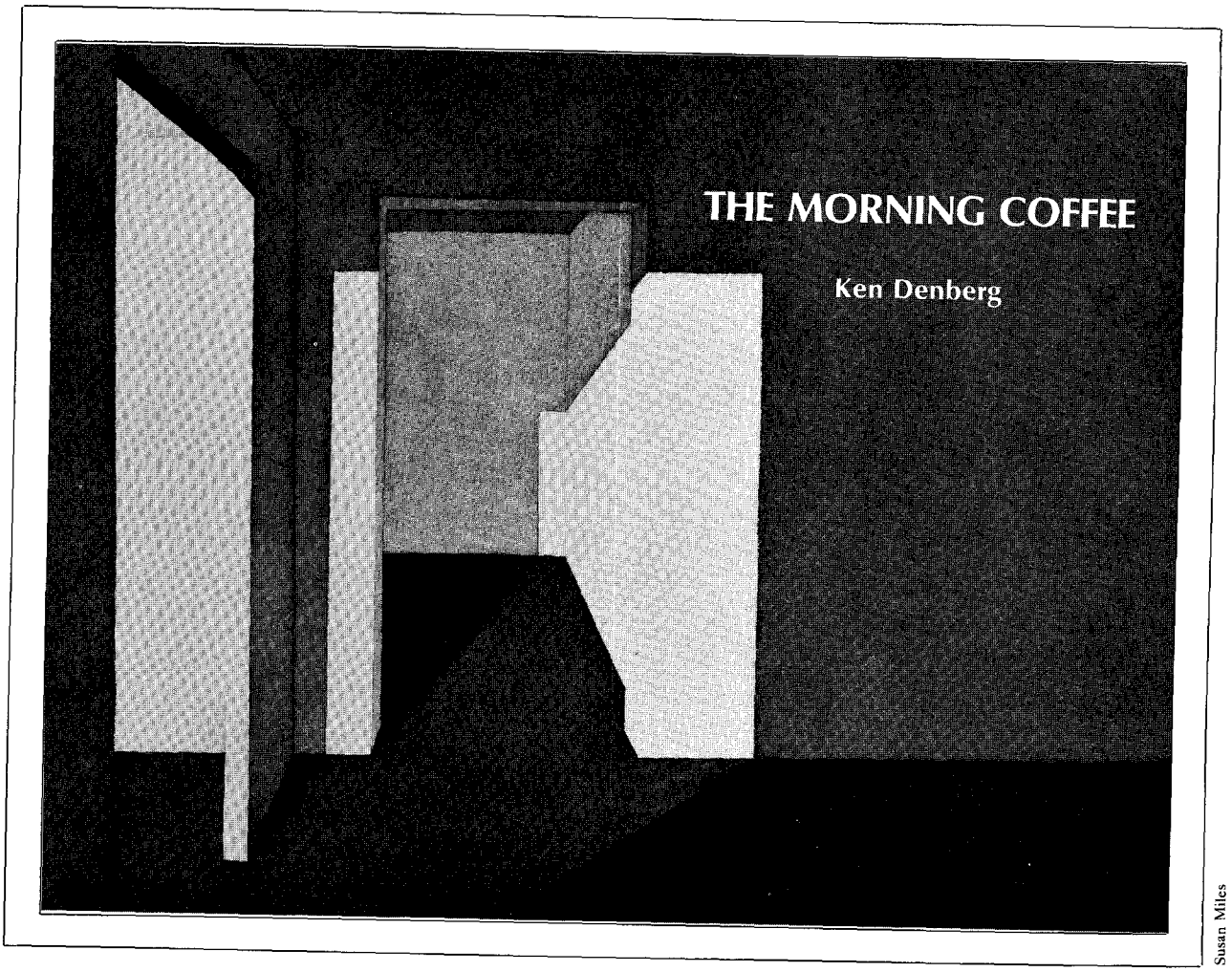

Susan Miles

She would always get out of bed before me. She woke me when she stirred. I would lie awake and watch her dress and do the things most women do before going out for the day. Even when she was up for only a few minutes she looked as though she had been awake and fresh for hours. Her back was pale against the worn dress I'd seen a hundred times or more. And the buttons, there must be twenty of them on it. I don't know how she found them all. Her hair was dark and as the years passed I think it became darker, almost black. Her hands were small and that never changed for me, and her size never really changed either except for the lines that began to show around her mouth and forehead. She never smoked, or at least until we broke up.

I couldn't tire of the way she sat in front of the mirror and slowly, almost methodically chose the right bottle and brush and the changing textures of cloths to smear or wipe or dab on the creams and lotions. Her fingers moved within a small radius, arms never fully stretched or awkward. She never looked away or batted an eye while she made herself up. She vigorously washed her mouth and gargled, catching each particle, I imagine. And the way she fastened her stockings and brassiere. Her eyelashes were just right and her lipstick was patted and whatever else women do, I'm sure she did. She would always make a point of taking the tooth paste cap in her fingernails and give it a half rotation, then twist it the rest of the way, rolling the top against her palm down to her fingers. There. I can see her do it that way anytime I want. But she really doesn't do it anymore, or for me anymore.

I can't think of her doing that for anyone else. But I know she never actually did those things for me. It's this I suppose: I had the half-fantasy half-reality that she did those things *just* for me. I have trouble separating the two nowadays.

I used to work for her father. It wasn't a full-time job though. I would come to the shop and help when they were busy and often they weren't, but I'd come anyway. He liked me and I liked him. I was nearly twenty-one. It wasn't long before he gave me a key and I could open up on my way to school and have a cup of coffee before my class. She'd always come down and fix it for me. I don't think she knew I was in love with her then. I used to watch her play volleyball at school with her girlfriends and she would wave to me between her plays. I wanted to do what men and women did with her but I was afraid. I knew that I would make love to her, I had to. I thought of her day and night and thought of when I could kiss her. I don't think I felt passion for her exactly, I don't know what it was. I just knew that I had to kiss her and I'd die if I didn't do it soon. I kissed her a week later and didn't die after all.

KEN DENBERG recently moved from South Carolina to Oregon. This is his first appearance here.

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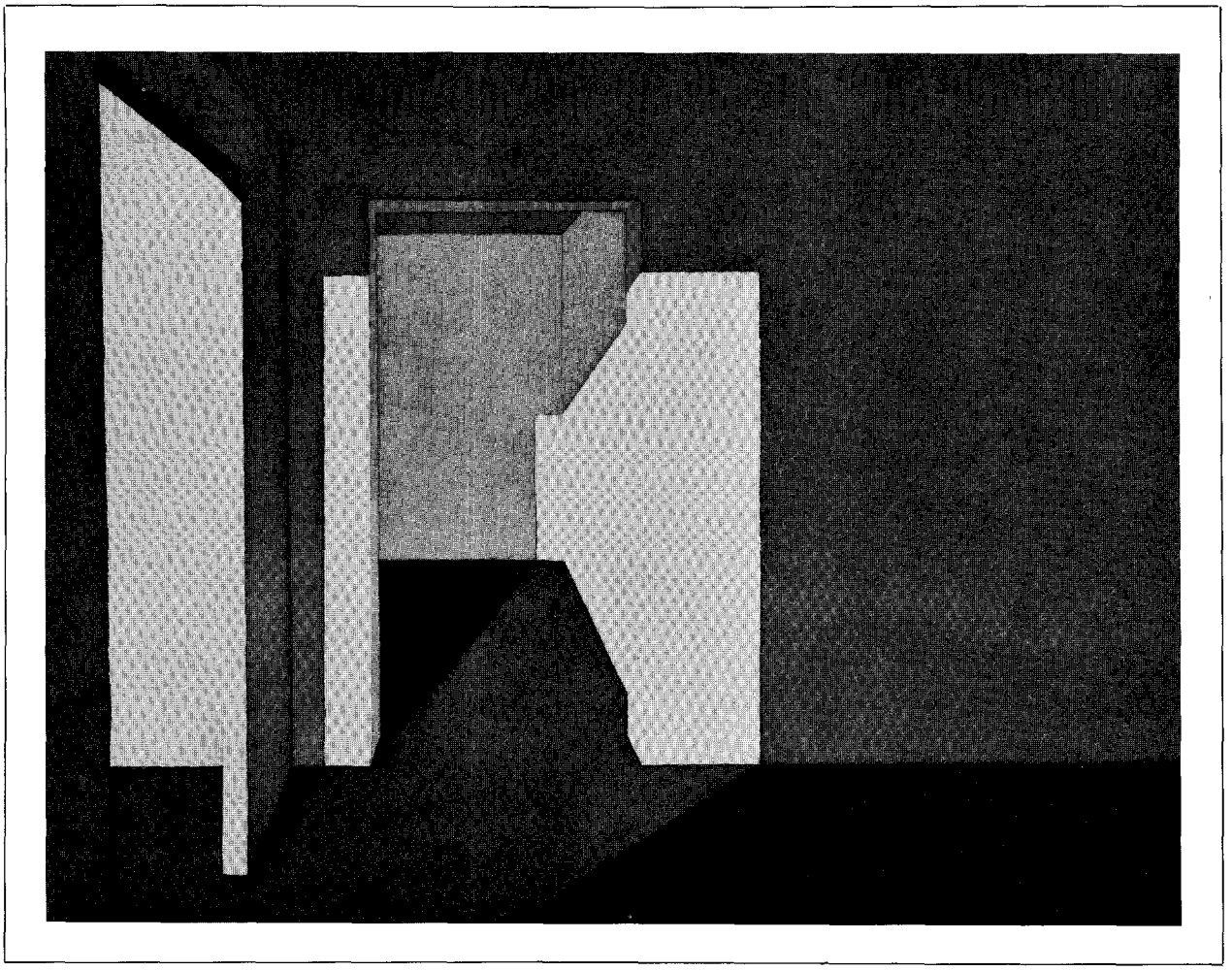

Her father always went to the movies on Friday night. Everyone knew this. The key had burned a hole in my pocket for some time. And then I began to think of it as ice, and if I didn't hurry and use it it would melt. It was Friday night and I was across the street in the tobacco shop, pretending to be buying cigarettes I already had. I was waiting for her father to leave for the movies. I could wait no more. He came to the door, spoke something into it before he left and as forceful as I was timid I made myself walk over and put the key in the door and turn the handle. It opened. "Are you there?" I called. "It's Rob." She answered and called me up to her room.

She seemed slightly surprised to see me. I couldn't help looking at the full gown she had on. It was old and much out of style, I supposed. "It belonged to my mother and you needn't stare at it so," she remarked. We were innocent in front of each other and yet she knew why I was there and why she let me go immediately to her room. I kissed her, and she pushed away. "You must go," she said. "No." "Then what do you want with me?" "I want to do what the adults do," never saying what it is they do. "No," but she had to say that. I kissed her again. "Tell me you think I'm pretty," she said. "You are pretty." "Tell me you love me." "I love you." She began to cry. I sat down on the opposite corner of the bed and asked her why she was crying. She didn't answer. "Tell me why you're crying?" "Because I'm supposed to cry," and then she began to sob. I tried to comfort her as best I could and she asked the two questions again. I gave her the same answers.

"You must wait a minute first." She went to the bath and closed the door. It seemed like an hour before she returned. "What are you doing?" "I am making myself beautiful," she answered.

I turned off the light in her room and left the hall light on. The door was opened an inch or two to let a small beam in. In a moment she came out and I could smell the perfume she was wearing. I do not think I have smelled anything more fragrant. She sat on the side of the bed and asked me to tell her I loved her again, "I love you very much," in the most mature voice I had. We lay down together.

In an hour we were asleep. Sometime later she was tugging at the sheets and telling me to move over, "They must be washed before my father comes home and hung to dry. I can't leave them for Mrs. Levy, she will know what we've done." "I want her to know." "Silly boy, what would she say?" She did not dress and seemed so natural, as if she had stood naked in front of me many times.

But she has stood naked in front of me many times. I can't remember how many and I won't insult the memory by trying a number. That was long ago. Now she lives with Sloan and I wonder if he lies in bed and watches her in the bath each morning. I bet he doesn't. □

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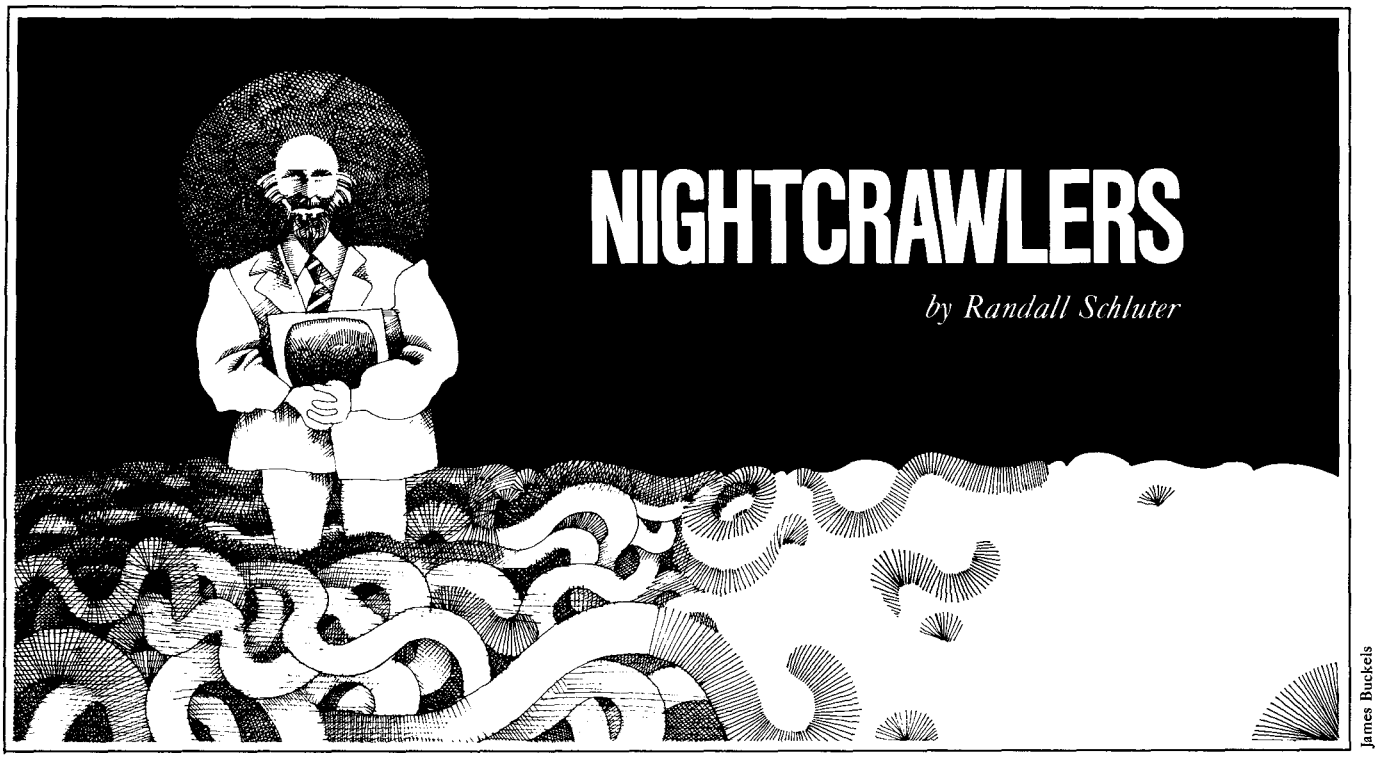

The sun's disappearance was not wholly unexpected, for it had exhibited many signs of instability. On October 31 the sun stood still for three and a half minutes, a brief pause that went unnoticed until a brave young astronomer, acting against the wishes of his superiors, reported the incident to the *Union* in an exclusive interview. On February 14 the sun rose from the northeast and set in the southwest, and on the following day it rose in the southwest, made two or three loops (accounts differ) and set in the north. On March 23 it played on the horizon, bobbing up and down before it consented to rise. On April 30 it winked. Thereafter the sun normalized until that summer evening when it set and got lost on the way back. August 15 was a day devoid of significance, but now it is the anniversary of the end of the world.

Modern science was baffled. A group of astronomers, taking into account the events preceding the disappearance, concluded that the earth had become wayward and had finally spun out altogether, plunging us into the void. Oddly, few people accepted this theory, for, as a brave young geologist remarked, "I don't see why we must blame the earth when the sun plays hookey. Actually, she has been pretty good about the whole thing."

At work, the office whirred with explanations. Someone mentioned a horrid new weapon in the hands of our enemies (Russia, China, Mexico). Someone else mentioned a horrible weapon in our hands getting out of hand. We discussed the CIA and the KGB. Flying saucers (UFO's) were mentioned. We talked of labor unions, cartels, negroes, and the International Bankers. Serious proposals were made, hypotheses considered, speculations engaged in. I mentioned God (Yahweh) and the coffee break ended.

I stopped my car on eastbound Interstate 80 and looked at the river, sullen and gloomy in the fog. "What are you doing?" asked my wife.

"Looking for frogs," I said.

Apparently, we had overvalued the sun in many respects. Plants still grow, though they are spectral from surviving on starlight. A brave young botanist has introduced a mutant iceplant that lives comfortably on no light whatever. We have made other adjustments as well. Methods exist to produce a facsimile of day: fluorescent light, gas heat, enclosed malls, advertising campaigns: techniques that stand us in good stead in this war against darkness. One may live for weeks without seeing his own shadow. But the controlled demeanor of our light, as if it were hiding something, unnerves us.

"This won't do," said my wife. Sears held a sale on candles, and my wife bought three cases. Candles have become a craze. Everyone, everywhere, carries candles, even in bright rooms. The streets are fluid with stars, with passers-by hunching over the flames like dour monks. The doorman at the Senator Hotel holds a candle in his left hand as he opens the door with his right, and the wax melts in stalagmites down to the ground.

Someone mentioned the tallow cartel.

The seasons are degenerating, so that soon we shall have no seasons. The weather is cool as an autumn night, not icy as modern science predicted. The winter snowfall was light, and catastrophes, such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, droughts, and even earthquakes have been

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RANDALL SCHLUTER is stationed with the Air Force in England. "Nightcrawlers" is his first published story.

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absent. In some ways the earth is more comfortable than before. Deserts have become habitable, and the icecaps have receded slightly. Instead of rain we have frequent fogs that congeal occasionally into drizzle.

No moon. It is up there, a black pupil that one can see if he squints. I was squinting at the moon and my wife asked, "What are you doing?"

"Looking for angels."

I never found them, and so we all walk the streets with candles in our hands, like stars under the eternally new moon. Our hands have become waxen. Carpets are slick with wax, and sidewalks are caked with clots of red and white. The gutters are full of matchsticks. "This won't do," said my wife, as she scrubbed soot from our clothes.

We have made adjustments, but difficulties have arisen. In Sacramento, California, the citizens have faced an invasion of nightcrawlers. In Denver, Colorado, the citizens have encountered an invasion of owls; a similar invasion of bats has infested Washington, D.C., and ravens have devoured South Dakota's Corn Palace. Such invasions have taken place all over the country, but the worst has been in New Orleans, where the citizens are knee-deep in slugs. We are not overpowered, however. It is nothing like locusts.

Iceplant thrives. Green and rusty fingers have pushed inward from foggy coastal regions, spreading across the countryside and forcing the government to consider the food potential of the plant. I understand that the situation is even worse in the Soviet Union, where certain fungi, including edible types long under cultivation, have gone wild on both sides of the Urals. Kiev has submitted to the truffle, and in the south the Armenians have abandoned Erevan to the hallucinatory Fly-Agaric.

We seldom mention the tetragrammaton, but we have made attempts at propitiation. Censers swing and charcoal smolders on every porch and windowbox. The air is thick with sandalwood, lotus, eucalyptus, cinnamon, frankincense and myrrh. We have grown edgy, for we want something to happen. We try to make it happen. The American Dental Association has pooled its reserves of fillings to smelt a calf. Mithraism is rampant in the armed services, to the point that it is virtually the official religion. Rome has acknowledged its debt to Baal, and the Highway Patrol has cracked down on moderately drunk drivers. "Tonight," a CHP spokesman announced, "more than fifty drivers will be booked in this city for drunk driving. Those will be the lucky ones. The others will be dead or maimed in the gutters." We have overlooked such direct threats of violence, for we understand instinctively that the situation requires blood. Fire and blood: carry candles and kill.

My wife was watching the news. "Have the Jews converted yet?" I shouted through the window.

"What are you doing?"

"Painting the lintel."

Seven months into the night a new panic struck the city (every week a new panic). It got around that we have been punished for Frivolity. Schoolchildren passed out leaflets announcing a meeting on the K Street Mall next to the Convention Center. There the Boy Scouts had constructed a tremendous scaffold, which the Girl Scouts draped with black bunting and sprinkled with oil and water. The night of the meeting, we each brought something frivolous. My wife brought a red scarf that she had purchased on an impulse. Someone brought a pair of lacy garters. Someone else brought a set of monogrammed golf clubs. A musicologist brought his component system, and an art collector arrived with a roomful of conceptual art. Iceplant appeared, and so did nose warmers, television sets, pipes, posters, gallons of aftershave, macrame, vibrators, a copy of *Mother Shipton's Prophecies,* skimmers, feather boas, frou-frou and knick-knacks of all sorts. I brought a tube of suntan lotion. The line to the scaffold was seven blocks long. Jugglers and buskers entertained us, and the refreshment committee served hot wassail and oranges.

The mayor officiated in his Shriner fez. As each citizen tossed his bit of Frivolity onto the scaffold, the mayor shook his hand. There were many long speeches, some tearful. As our Frivolity piled up to the K Street stars, men in white overalls unloaded crates full of dogs and cats from the Animal Shelter. The mayor clumsily hacked with a knife until the gutter ran red as advertised. Then the workmen slung the carcasses on top, and flames reeking of gasoline shot up. The mayor thanked us for coming and announced his candidacy for re-election.

We have successfully adapted, though we walk the smoking streets with candles in our hands. "Your eyes are getting sunken," my wife told me.

"So are yours," I replied, "So are everybody's."

"This won't do."

We walk the night with candles like stars under the new moon, and everything is ghostly. We are becoming vampires: fire and blood. We crossed the bridge at the turn of the tide; the fog drifted; and I looked at the river.

"What are you doing?"

"No blood."

We wander past a sunrise as invisible as the moon, the mark of the beast upon us. Our eyes have shrivelled, and we are so pale that we can hardly see ourselves. One week we sacrificed mirrors: we smashed the mirrors of the city. Glass and silver littered the streets like stars, the stars glittered above us, and our candles flashed in the dark. Stars were everywhere, like the nightcrawlers. I saved a chunk from a barroom mirror and hid it in my bedroom.

"What are you doing?"

"Nothing." I saw nothing, as the moon glared blindly.

We manage without the sun; it is not as nasty as one might have expected. The search for explanations goes on, and the sacrifices. I think I have it figured out. We face a general disorder, as general as night. Nothing specific is involved. Nothing in particular has blotted the sun, which a brave young astrologer claims is still up there, emitting all but visible influence. We have been punished, or rather a privilege has been withdrawn, without brouhaha, without trumpets. No angels, and like vampires we sit in the dark with nightcrawlers up to our ankles. The worst is that it would make no difference if the sun ever came back. If it rises tomorrow, it will discover a new earth. We have adapted, we have made our choice. We do not see this world of fog and smoke, we are blind to the stars, though we are exiles among them. □

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Robert Muffoletto

ROOM-MATES

Inara Cedrins

She's at the door watching me, I'm doing the dishes, I've just finished rinsing her favorite round glass. I turn, saying: "Look, your favorite glass is clean!" and my hand knocks against the open cupboard door, the glass shatters loudly. We both double over with laughter. I try to re-enact the scene and say "look—" again but I'm laughing too hard.

filmy slap empty

When she turns a corner she makes a squealing sound like she's driving a toy car. She's entering the Drive for the first time. It's easy, I tell her soothingly, leaning forward. She relaxes and says in wonderment, it's just like gliding. There are few cars tonight, distant as dreams. Trees black against a powder-blue sky. Why in cities is the sky always faintly pink, I wonder. Then she switches on the radio, loud, and tosses her head. Her lashes are perked with mascara, radiating stilled amazement from her wide eyes. We get lost on Lincoln avenue. Then we locate the place and park a block down. Her favorite song is playing now—and we sit in the dark car with the key still in the ignition to hear it through.

mesh flint apparent

The leaves fall down aimlessly, confusing the forest. There are people everywhere in the woods, we hear their voices though we can't see them. I think of ladybugs hidden on the undersides of leaves. I ask her what kind of mascara she uses. We can't find a pop machine in the pavilion so we eat our sandwiches in the car, getting Cokes at a gas station. The day's outing disappoints us. We wanted more—more more more! Going home, we stop at the Pellican lounge for Mateus and the woman cards me—then says, "Oh, you're plenty old enough!" I am resentful and I have a headache. She is tired and never will initiate a conversation. We draw the orange curtains at home and drink silently in their glow till she leaves for work.

blunt cluttered slope

We're both looking through the orange curtains, waiting for the arrival of our Volkswagen men. Hers in a new neat car, mine in a battered bug. Both cream-colored: but mine will be splashed with slush. It rides like a motor-boat. I am slightly jealous because she is younger, her guy is younger, and I should ride in a statelier car. I have on my green turtle-neck. I twist in front of her mirror, debating a belt. Do you think he'll grab at me, I say. She's laughing. She says, well you dress like a green serpent and then expect him not to grab at you, I don't know about you—

seaweed skid steal

School four nights a week. I am afraid I won't be able to get the stencil onto the silkscreen. I turn in my sleep, hearing every tick of the clock. I dab quickly but the green emulsion peels away and sticks to my fingers like Saran wrap. Giving up, I leave the screen in that room and go out into the corridor. Portraits of the past high school principals hung in a row, lockers with combination locks dangling heavily. A narrow rail track like for kids' train rides

INARA CEDRINS is a graduate of Columbia College (Chicago), lives in northern Indiana, and has sometimes done woodcuts for the NAR.

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swerves glintingly into darkness. The train waits: I step in and it moves along smoothly though I can hear a shrill screeching somewhere. As I ride by close to the lockers, one opens soundlessly and the boy I have a crush on leans stiffly out. He bends and impassively presses his cheek to mine. It is the softest touch I have ever felt. I wake. I hear footsteps, the faucet running. Her boyfriend must be here. The hallway I painted flat red reflects into my room through the door crack.

tenacious plush mealy

I take the Burgundy out of the paper bag and put it on the side shelf. She hears me and comes out of her room, blinking. She won't have to work on Christmas eve—I hover around her, trying to be cheery. She leaves the bathroom door open as she washes her face, it looks very pink then. She still stumbles around until she puts in her contacts. Then her whole face seems to sharpen. Inquisitively she peers over my arm as I mix the dough for peach cobbler. We each go into our own room and shut the door and scotch tape and ribbon our gifts. At ten we have opened them and sit in a mess of paper wrappings, holding our new sweaters up against ourselves. It is a long time till midnight and she looks irritated. Too much wine. "I should lose some weight," I meditate. "Yes you should!" she snaps. The next morning we heat up the peach cobbler again and eat too-large portions to finish it.

sever mush bullseye

Wondered if I only loved when there was snow, decided there was no connection, thought about what to tell the actor if he called again. How did she unhinge from her men so easily: soaped, oiled, noiseless. I am thinking of women smoother than I'll ever be—who have cut off all their hair and consist only of metal-clean lines. She cut her fluffy hair and is beginning to grow plump. Drinking a lot. When you're that young your body is not yet quite yours and you don't know drinks and rich treats will affect it . . . She says gin smells like roses. My home-made bread baked in the angel-food form, she isn't home, lack of cinnamon. My feet up in the window, I watch the Sunday traffic go by.

amused limber harbor

Grudgingly she goes out for breakfast with me. We both order blintzes. We are both white-faced with sleepiness and we are getting fat. She drinks her coffee with a grimace. She wants to know if I want to come to her friend's house to watch TV. She knows I can't stand her friend. She wants to know, pugnaciously. I won't. I am dropped off at home. The window glass looks smeary and the nursing home across the street looks like a barren landing field, all white angles. She doesn't introduce me to her friends when they come in and it irritates me. I don't like the insipid pictures she tapes on her wall, I would like to keep the door shut. I lie on the couch and occupy the living room.

souse snap relieve

Now only a row of plants on the windowsill, I can carry them two at a time: the door to her room firmly closed. The movers took everything but the plants, I wouldn't let them, I was too polite . . . The floor sounds out its emptiness. Suppressed anger: I am thinking, but she didn't even give me notice!—I open the back door for the last time. There are still Christmas tree needles between the inner and screen door, the air is fresh. It will be spring soon. I leave the windows naked. They would like to draw themselves together into bony white skeletons—and I think, in the new tiny apartment, I won't even have room for the orange curtains.

shift christ plaster □

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TWO STORIES
by Mark Gillette

THAT SIDE OF THE DOOR

To the Memory of Lynyrd Skynyrd

Time had dragged on for days. I decided to look around for some fun. I thought I found it at a place called 'the Jug.' I said I wasn't no stranger, I've been this way before. I told her to put on her night-shirt and her evening gown.

She didn't say much. I mistook it for hiding something. I just shrugged it off to the way women act.

But none of it seemed to change time. The afternoon moved more and more slowly. We ordered up a few drinks and I tried talking to her while our heads were humming, but she seemed preoccupied and uninterested; smoking cigarettes and glancing at the clock over the door.

After a few drinks everything seemed to move in slow motion. Even words in slow motion. She waited for something to happen. It did.

But she wasn't watching the clock over the door when he came in; I was. It was so dark in that wretched place that I was probably the only one to notice he was armed with a sawed-off shotgun. I could only see the shadow of his face as he walked closer.

It usually doesn't take long for thinking to become doing. It was events that moved too fast for me. She turned her head. She saw, realized, and whispered, deep, "Cameron." I froze.

He raised the shotgun level with my head and cocked it. I swallowed. When a second feels like a long time, it hurts to be that way. He said, real slow, real low, "Hey mister. That's my woman there. So this might be all for you."

It's not much fun looking straight down a 20-gauge, so I said slower, lower, "Listen mister, I didn't even kiss

DAWN

He had left one morning, as usual, when she expected something. The cries of the baby had waked her. She was slow in rising and feeding her daughter. She tried to recall the events of the previous night, whether they had loved or fought, but the thoughts of early morning were still unclear. Perhaps it was nothing.

But when the noon feeding came and went and he still hadn't called from the office, she began to wonder if she should worry about it. She had that feeling about him. She didn't wonder too long; she knew it wouldn't do any good.

Wondering became knowing when he didn't come home at the usual time. She had supper ready and was waiting for him while she played with the baby on the carpet. Later she fell asleep in the chair, waiting.

After three days had passed, and there was no word from him, she called her mother. She told how he had left for work one morning and he hadn't come home. Her mother understood and said for her to bring Dawn and stay at the farm for a few days. If he wanted to find her, he would know where to look.

It had been a long time since she had been back to the farm, the place where she had grown, so she agreed. After the call she began packing the things she would need for a two or three night stay. While she got the baby's things, she asked herself if she was being hasty. Perhaps it would be better to be there when he got back. No, damn him, no; if he had got carried away with another woman again, or was out gambling or drinking, then no, she wasn't about to wait around for him to come out of it. She would leave a note and he would know where to find her.

She had been at the farm almost two weeks with no word, when her father woke her in her old bedroom late one night. Her father led her downstairs, past her mother rocking the child, to the telephone. She was asleep and did not understand what was happening, instinct placed the phone by her head. She heard the empty hiss. She said,

"Hello? Are you there?"

"Hello. I'm here."

"I can't hear you very well. You must be far away."

"I can hear you fine."

"Where are you?"

"I'm not far away."

"What are you doing?"

"Don't worry, I'm coming to get you."

He hung up and she heard him. She instantly grew upset with herself for having been so easy on him. No, damn him, not this time. There had been other times, but not this time.

He parked the car by the gate and walked down the lane. He had done it a hundred times before, just like every time he came to see her. It was dusk when he came upon the farm quietly. Past the barn where her father was milking and into a clump of trees which stood before the house. Though it was getting dark, he could see her sitting on the porch steps. At the top of the steps her mother held the baby; it seemed like her mother kept better care of it than she did. He waited.

In the dark he saw something white. Like a hundred times before he reached his hand to pet; it jumped. The small kitten darted from the trees toward the house. She didn't try to stop it, but her mother followed it, baby in arms, into the house. It was the moment he was looking for.

He approached her and she knew he was coming. She

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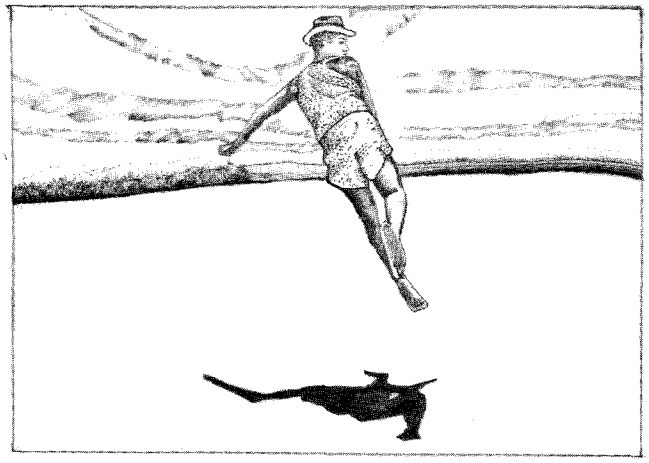


her. I don't want no trouble from you. Just let me get that side of the door and you'll never see me again."

Then it seemed like he wasn't even going to move, he was moving so slow. I was scared and fearing for my life. A shiver ran down my backbone. He was big and bad and ugly and he was pointing that gun straight at me.

I felt a terrible weight upon me, just as time stopped, hung, and though I could only see the shadow of his face I knew that his burden was even greater. He saw more in that one frozen second than you or I might see in a lifetime. All things became clear to him and all knowledge was his. For once, he knew what love was and what it meant. He saw the difference of being and not-being and in between. He recognized right and wrong and called them by name.

But he just didn't know what to do. Or maybe he couldn't bring himself to do it. Whatever, to carry a shotgun is no time to fumble. I for one, at least, was concerned. But who knows? I might have even done him a favor.

As time unfroze, I realized that I had the hard work before me. And not much time to do it in. My path was clear to the door. Some one knocked a glass over. He turned to her and started to scream. And I was singing a song about a mile that side of the door. I only wanted to have some fun.

Time went speeding away and never again moved quite that slow. □

MARK GILLETTE is a student at the University of Northern Iowa.

didn't even seem surprised when he presented himself at the foot of the steps.

"Hello."

"Where did you come from?"

"I was standing in the trees."

"You shouldn't chase kittens like that."

"So?"

"Are you ready to take me home?"

"Yes, almost. There are a few things we have to talk over."

"Like what?"

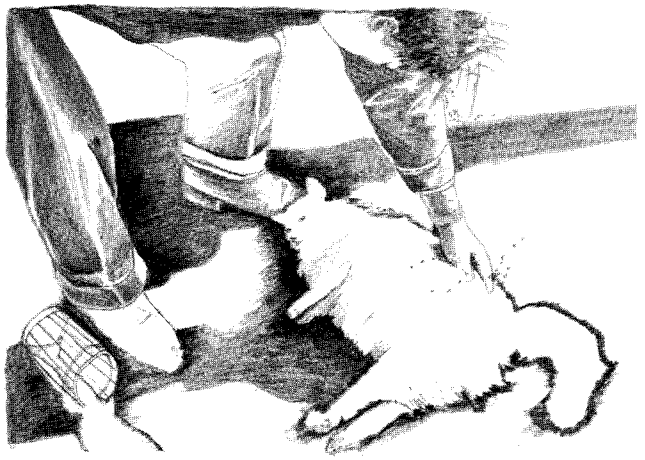
"Oh, you know."

It was all perfect. In a few seconds he could walk away leaving behind all his problems and taking the things that were dear to him. He knew it didn't seem right, but it was that baby that was tearing them apart. He hadn't wanted a child, but now he was doing the best he could for it.

"How's your mom and dad?"

"Okay."

"And Dawn?"



Pamela Scesniak

"Good."

"And what about you? How have you come through all this?"

"Well . . ."

"Yeah, I know. It's kind of messy right now. I didn't mean it that way. It just turned out like that. But I think we can get this whole thing straight again. I want to. I don't think I have to say I love you."

"I love you."

"Do you want to walk up the lane?"

"Okay."

They walked up the lane in the moonlight. It was just like it had always been. They had run away before. Love, her parents had called it.

He parked the car by the gate and walked down the lane. In front of the sun forever setting. Past the barn where her father forever milked and into a clump of trees which had always stood before the house. He could see her sitting on the porch steps.

She would be almost seventeen. Life on the farm had blossomed her. He could see that it was innocence and youth that made her unsure in her body. But of her beauty there was no doubt. Time would make all things work together.

Maybe it was her beauty, her youth and innocence that drove his thinking on. He hadn't meant any harm to them, ever. Yet here he was.

In the dark he saw something white. He reached his hand around it. It was cold and hard. He held it between his hands. Harder. It was powder.

He approached her and she knew he was coming. It was his right. No matter what they may have done or said to change it, she was his. She didn't even seem surprised when he presented himself at the foot of the steps. □

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Terry Spohn

EXCEPT FOR THE RIVER

Roy Behrens

Our President is in Uruguay this week, in the rain. He has been seen limping in the company of the Minister of Internal Security. He is well-groomed, better than most of us remember. His hair appears to be returning. The front page is pocked with his pictures. He is kissing a waif. He is toasting a bureaucrat's wife. They are smiling. Our President looks alert, fluent. We, of course, are proud. The world is teeming with embarrassing situations. Take the Railroad Question, or the enigmatic October Epidemic, for which several terrorist groups claim credit. Goats limp in Syria. Snakes enter homes in Tuscaloosa, slick as scars. Our President is concerned. The First Lady is concerned. Slowly, and with painted nails, she twists her wedding ring this way and then that. Around the temperate zones spiders survive drowning, appliances fail, men grow old and their teeth rot. In Bolivia, the tin roof of the world, shoes have collapsed all over the country. Our President is spotted rushing from capitol to countryside, is glimpsed between sips of tea or just out of the bathroom. Here he is, in the corner of our eye. He is videotaped signing his name and inspecting porcelain factories. He is fascinated by work gloves and safety devices.

* * *

"He was very short, smaller than you or I." Leaning over the newspaper racks, over the smell of woodwork and books, Carl Dombrowski's breath reeks of old meat, mildew, and Copenhagen.

"When did you see him?" I whisper. My wife, long gone, would never speak to him. We are talking about Josef Stalin.

Of my wife there's this: she liked Elvis and poems about the moon.

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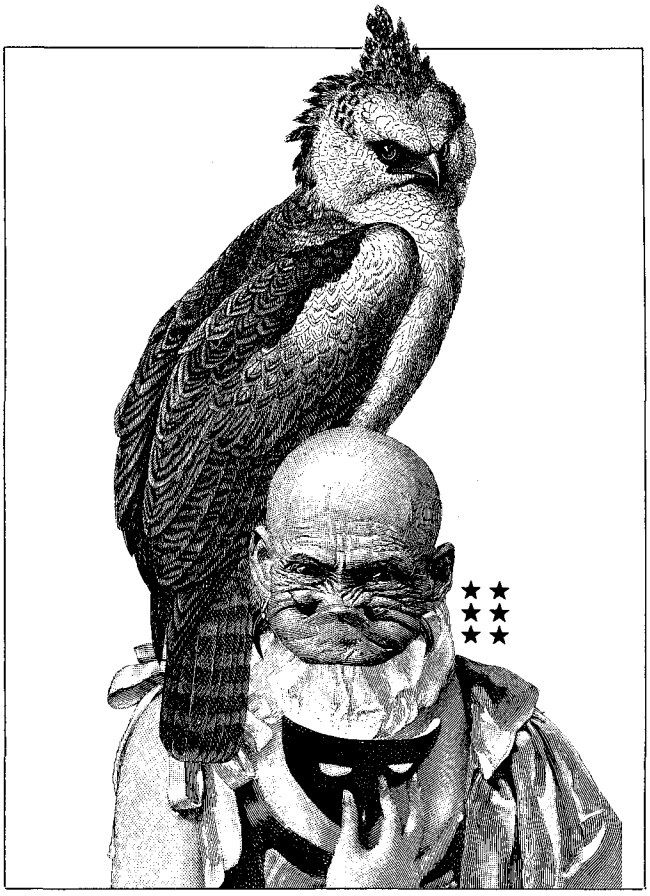

TERRY SPOHN is a Minnesotan whose work has appeared in Ascent *and* Mississippi Review.

Our President is very good with short people. He handles them effortlessly in thirty-point headlines, in textured wirephotos, in verbose, affectionate telegrams to we, the people. We are in awe of his prowess. We send him holy cards, Indian belts, our sons. He wires:

MY FELLOW AMERICANS STOP HOW GOOD IT IS TO SPEAK WITH YOU AGAIN STOP I BEAR MANY GREETINGS FOR YOU FROM AROUND THIS GREAT WORLD OF OURS STOP I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND YOU ONCE AGAIN OF OUR ETCETERA.

back sometimes all the way to the bridge column. Our President is our left jab, our lonesome end, the jaws of our freedom. He is Anzio. Bridge is his favorite game. It is not generally recognized as ours. Ours roar like furnaces in the stadia and spit our embers out into the truck-filled evening.

* * *

Mail is not delivered today. Today is the Lord's Day. The Lord lies over the plains in a fertile, fleecy haze. The Lord wafts through our thoughts like fish, teases fathers, fills children. I, myself, am waiting for the mail. I have ordered certain devices through the mail. I have grave concern for my privacy, but the price was right.

My wife is getting fat in Goliad. It must be obvious from the look of the place. The slamming of doors suddenly stopped. But the hurt got hard and bony as it went numb. What I feel now, Dr. Moran says, is displaced pain. Dr. Moran: such small hands for an Irishman. He wears two-tone shoes. His eyebrows are like wings.

Carl Dombrowski is returning from church. His cowlick, rude as cactus, stands up auburn in the late sunlight. He has been praying over his shoulder. His allergies, his broken zipper and his accent make me shy with him. His mind fell out like his teeth in the Lubyanka Prison. "Comrade Stalin refuses to die," he slurs. We picture a lighted room in the Kremlin: Comrade Stalin in his bed. In the street below, Beria's car is running. The driver is a small man, thankful for his job. Comrade Stalin refuses to die. Carl Dombrowski drifts across our window, stalked by Comrade Stalin with a cardboard suitcase full of pamphlets: Comrade Stalin on the October Question, Comrade Stalin on the Railroad Question, Comrade Stalin on the Telephone Question.

* * *

In the dream the snowflakes were puffs of silence. In the flake-filled air the touch of her fingers trampled my boundaries. I leaked away, or burst like a balloon. We were figurines in a water-filled paperweight. Only the dog was moving. My viscera, blown to shreds by what was packed inside, glistened with the specks of snow. My throat ached in the morning.

* * *

Our President sleeps fitfully in Montevideo. Mosquitoes come to him in the dark, whir warily just within earshot. Like ideas, they flee movement. Gracefully, Our President bares an arm, his right arm, in the darkness. He waits, thinking of Marie: the moons of her fingernails.

Just outside the door, in the lighted hall, there is a leatherneck. He is seated at attention in a wooden chair. The leatherneck carries codes, scrambles, predetermined orders, counter thrusts, contingencies marked in red. He carries the training and confidence of we, the people. He carries a forty-five automatic for Our President's protection. He is the right arm of Our President.

* * *

Love keeps the windows clean, waters the plants and takes short, coffee-filled breaks. Love pads around the house in blue slippers and pulls crumbs up into the vacuum cleaner: its own brownies. The refrigerator expands and contracts under the honesty of its light. Love's dust-filled rhomboids move across the kitchen floor and run their fingers along the new electric stove. Love washes the plates and forks and coffee cups. The suds die in grey water.

Since my wife left I've noticed how the neighborhood is fading in the sunlight. How the paint flakes off the eavespouts. How the street is crumbling at the intersection. I spend my time behind the want ads. I want. On the other side my legs are crossed and the electric bill is overdue. From down the block mailmen drop by with warnings. Watch out for the Power Company. Watch out for the furniture store. Watch out for Jesus. Every day there are more. Watch out for the book club, the record club. Watch out for your parents. They'll be gone before

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you know it. My Ford is settling into the oil-soaked street. And more: when the moon is full, my wife, lambent in Goliad, cries.

* * *

PORTRAIT PRIZES

Citizen portraits of Our President will be judged at 4 p.m. Prizes will be awarded in the following categories:

Philosophical
Pragmatic
Suggestive
Reflective
Anticipatory
Behavioral

Lectures on the development of Our President's Distance will accompany dinner.

* * *

I am wearing my grey sweater because it isn't cloudy. Imagine my silver lining. Imagine birds. Birds are important, too. Through the holes in the elbows of my grey sweater, cold air glides like geese up the insides of my arms.

Our President, as faceted as the eye of a bluebottle fly, steps up, steps down, salutes flags, anthems, overflights. His face, like the moon, is sometimes turned away. In concern perhaps. He worries because we do. Are we safe? What if we are?

Women pose an issue. There is a profession shortage, a compassion shortage. They picket Our President's birthplace. Lacking a strikeable trade, they fill their purses with ammunition and unspecific anxiety. Look there, that one. The one in the grey coat from an expensive, well-smelling store. She's angry, and beautiful when. But, used to personal service, she looks lost in the picket line, and the handle of her sign has slipped down between slender, wanting, calfskin-covered fingers.

Her sign: NO MORE IN BED
'TIL WE'RE OUT OF THE RED

When Our President was a boy in a Protestant neighborhood, his teammates called him "Red." Some called him "Hayshaker" behind his back, because he was simple and strong. Arms like turkey loaves. Later, they voted for him. So did I.

* * *

Today is the Lord's Day. Last week Our President was in Rome. He was followed up the Spanish Steps by several doctors, each a specialist. Large white vans waited in the street, their engines running. Our President, elegant but ascetic in muslin, sported two left moles on his cheek. The Minister of Social Inspection escorted him by the elbow. The hippies were friendly, like simple natives. They offered him music and earrings. They offered him their seat. Their seat was stone, was cold, was dragged down from the hills by slaves three thousand years ago. Our President accepted. It was good for the Nation.

AND ALL OF MANKIND STOP WHEN WE HAVE REACHED TRUE UNDERSTANDING WITH OUR NEIGHBORS WE CAN STOP WAR STOP RACISM STOP DEATH STOP THERE IS NO LIMIT TO ETCETERA

Here is the award-winning mood photograph, taken in Sumatra. Notice the birds in flight. Our President's cheeks are hollow, his mouth drawn down. His goatlike eyes. Perhaps he has just been informed of a verdict. Evening light softens his nose and the rake of his jaw suggests to us our duty.

We straighten one another's ties at the bus stop. We are polite with the telephone operator. We are patient with cars and generous with our women. Here's what they say: they say Comrade Stalin is a beauty. His deep paternal gaze, his timbre, his firing squads. They say our women stare and their mouths twitch at the corners. They want to be his customer. They shop for negligees to answer his knock in. His chiseled temples, his scar, the presence of his peasant's hands reach down into them, down through the bouquets and the black lashes to the ripples of their secret voice.

Our questions are answered and vice-versa. Mountains pile up and clouds, by their own miraculous idea, lie flat against the dew point. Our President represents us here, voices our problems to the machinery of history. With his long, thick-knuckled fingers he reaches across photographs to make himself clear, to touch another with his humanity right at the point of balance. In the back of his mind he has memorized our position, our field preparations, our assets, our relation to the sun, to the woods on our left, our proximity to water.

* * *

To the Russians Our President mentions the moon. My wife's moon. There are questions of lunatorial rights, moon blindness, moon goddesses, moon children. The moon in our eyes, beneath our feet, over Miami, full of the elderly now: Ponce de Leons from Pepsi, First National, Dun and Bradstreet crowded together in condos.

We all remember the moon, don't we? The long silent landscape? The astronauts returned. The moon was a rock, they had proof. They had pieces. They had pieces of the moon. Yes, the pieces certainly were rocks. And nothing had changed except now we have pictures of planet Earth.

* * *

Our horizon is close, cuffed. Ambulances threaten. Carl Dombrowski wavers in his doorway and disappears. We are alone again. A fertile, fleecy haze lies over the plains, wafts against the cuffs of our horizon. It is quiet and humid. It is the Lord's Day.

Tomorrow the mail will come: a landslide of letters from friends, rich cousins and oil companies. The paper will arrive. The water will sit in its pipes and the Quetzals will doze in their cages. Tomorrow Our President will arrive by plane in Oslo. The pine forests will be attentive as he flies over them. He will lean over and press his high forehead against the window, gentle as a mongoloid. Above the melting snow the sparse pine will look like whisker stubble across the mountainous wrinkles. Our President will begin to compose a telegram thinking that the land looks like a cheek, puffy and rumpled, slept-on. Except for the river, slick against the world and insistent as a scar, all the way back into the Arctic brilliance. □

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MAN, NATURE, AND MECHANISTIC SYSTEMS

An exercise in eco-philosophy

by Sigmund Kvaløy

Introductory Complaint

During the horrid amount of ecophilosophical and ecopolitical debates I have fallen into (at least seven times a week for ten years now and in 14 countries), I have become increasingly frustrated at meeting an almost universal tendency to the easy categorization of viewpoints into a few main groups. I have come to think that much attention should be devoted to this social phenomenon itself, because ours is a time of a major historical transition,—i.e., a time where coarse categorization as well as traditional thought frames are more than ever leading us astray, with consequences as negative as can be imagined!

The mentioned transition—what I call "The Eco-Social Crisis of the Industrial Growth Society"—is that of a total systems breakdown, an intricate cluster of process phenomena that can be understood only in interaction, in disregarding discipline border lines and in becoming conscious of ideological preconceptions.

People who share this starting point may try to disregard all that has been written, thought, and done before, believing that this suffices to tackle the unprecedented. They will, however, quickly show that their very minds are bound by a specific cultural and social background; what they say reveals itself to be in the final analysis something rather traditional—even though they may use some very new *words*. This is the case with writers like Buckminster Fuller, Marshall McLuhan, Paolo Soleri—all widely praised as radical innovators—and likewise with popular science writer like Adrian Berry, Freeman Dyson, Arthur C. Clarke and Carl Sagan.

All these powerful opinion-makers—powerful because they seemingly offer a way out to the troubled members of Industrial Growth Society—function, in my evaluation, as high priests of the religion of adventurous and optimistic Technology. Their thinking about human beings and societies is based—often in a non-explicit way—on mechanistic concepts, often containing admixtures of poetic eulogies on the mastery of nature or the ability to break with every tradition, attitudes which they think will be characteristic of the next generation.

Cybernetics is, in one form or another, the model these authors refer to. The same holds for quite a number of popularizing ecologists, too, if we look closer—even for many of those who are pessimistic about the ability of Industrial Growth Society to survive.

In this latter category, I am primarily referring to those whose work is heavily based on the thought that "equilibrium" or "steady state" is the goal of human societies, and who have offered little thought on the series of basic historical shifts that human societies have gone through: shifts resulting in very different sorts of social and psychological "equilibria." A dangerous term here is "system," because evidently it leads easily to the idea that something is "the right system"—a pattern where the various social elements click into their proper places like a key in its lock. In one variety of this kind of thinking, there is an assumption that any member of a given social system perceives and reasons within fixed and internally consistent frames of reference—even though the individual himself is conscious of only a fraction of the constituent elements.

The alternative: Dialectical Process Thinking

An alternative line of thought—which I feel much experience is backing up—is that human individuals are always *on the move* even in their reasoning and stringing

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together of ideas, and that the various fragments of their brain work are not all the time internally consistent: some things may be coming up dimly, while other things may gradually be discarded; at times, mutually incompatible ideas may actually be accepted concurrently. The norm of logical consistency is as a matter of fact not operative!

In other words: I do not think there are very many persons whose words and actions can be referred to anything like a philosophical *system*—a set of norms and hypotheses where in principle every kind of question is given a typical answer. Of course we may pose models of social ideologies as a research expedient, but I doubt whether this is conducive to truth-finding even in the study of members of very strongly traditional and "static" societies. If such were the case, most people would actually be living and thinking without creativity within rigid hierarchies of imperatives and conceptions—i.e., they would spiritually be parts of mechanoid and strictly predictable structures. This is in my view incompatible with the nature of the life process, a process which is never anything like a finished "axiomatic" system.

In other words: I do not think there are very many persons whose words and actions can be summed up as referring to anything like a philosophical *system*—a set of norms and hypotheses where in principle every kind of question is given a typical answer. Of course we may pose models of social ideologies as a research expedient, but I doubt whether this is conducive to truth-finding even in the study of members of very strongly traditional and "static" societies. If such were the case, most people would actually be living and thinking without creativity within rigid hierarchies of imperatives and conceptions—i.e., they would spiritually be parts of mechanoid and strictly predictable structures. This is in my view incompatible with the nature of the life process, a process which is never anything like a finished "axiomatic" system.

Life lacks "centralized government"

The alternative view I am proposing here is that the life process, which human beings are inescapably part of, is a half-blind stumbling and groping, where all the parts change together—slowly or quickly, never in discrete steps—and that something unprecedented is always in development or on the verge of appearing. The life process is structuring, *through* all this stumbling—but this contention is something almost everybody agrees to nowadays, so I am not concerned with it here. This "structure in the making" is, however, not a "system" such as an electronic system. A "system" (in the common sense) consists of a network (most often a pyramidal one) of fixed elements in interconnection; i.e., it is a finalized entity of discrete building blocks or nodes within a well-defined structure. A *computer* is such a system. If it breaks down, it is because its precise, discrete decision sequences (its interconnected "logic gates") are not distinct subdivisions any more, but have become muddled, shaded into gradual transitions, ridden with shortcuts or leaks; quite opposite to this, a living being breaks down if its functions become separated and distinct and precise, if it is transformed into something that readily yields to arithmetical, mechanical description. We are here speaking of the basic difference between qualitative, dynamic *complexity* and quantitative, static or pseudo-dynamic *complication*.

It is this distinction that is not made by authors like the ones I mentioned above and it is at least not made *clearly enough* by ecologically inspired authors like Paul Shepard in the U.S. and Edward Goldsmith in England.

If we talk to, say, a Norwegian fisherman or a farmer in Vietnam or a hunter in New Guinea, it will be in a certain important respect misleading to break down their everyday decisions into choices of acts within a system of preconceived alternative procedures, because that is not the process by which they pose their questions or find solutions. It is the way of thinking of our Industrial Growth Society planners and philosophers, but not of most people in the world. Their questions or statements or acts are generally not "the right ones," but still well-determined, goal-directed attempts colored by their background and the ever-changing and often extremely complex situation in which they are working at any moment. Most often, they can "handle the situation" because they have "handled so many situations" characteristic of *their* local life process before; they are handling it as an "*alternative procedure*" neither in the sense of one of several "alternatives on a (static) map" or a "decision tree."

One of the best examples I can think of is the navigational art of the old Polynesian seafarers, who found their way accurately on the immense expanses of the Pacific Ocean without any sort of instrument or written tables, just using their own complex training as partakers of the extremely manifold and demanding set of challenges that the Pacific environment was to them.[1]

We can understand in a superficial way some of the features of the environment they used, and which human abilities were involved, but we could not wire up and program a computer to do their job—though we could if they made choices within a fixed "system." The Polynesians could cope with challenges that were always to some extent unprecedented. This means their actions, too, had to be partly unprecedented. They had to be—in other words—continuously creative. The environment of, and the problems to be solved by, a computer-controlled space vehicle is extremely simple in comparison, and cannot be used as a model. What they had was a *general preparedness* for *sequences* of *partly known* and *partly new* features characteristic of that specific but complex process of nature that we call the Pacific Ocean. Even the new parts are here "characteristic" through the way they appear in sequences—such "modes of behavior of nature" as the Polynesians knew by experience, by the necessary creative approach, and by intensive training of their own intuitive ability.

My contention is that the academic procedure of charting such behaviors—including the devising of various alternative computer programs—easily leads into pitch black blind alleys: along the way we run into a lot of logical, semantic, and technical problems that are the result of both the method itself and the world view of the researcher, problems that are *not* inherent in the object studied.

Of course we can use "system" models to get *on the track* of what such people as the Polynesians are doing, but it will not suffice for the final, decisive stage of our research: to really get to know how they solved their existence problems. The test for real understanding is that we

[1] *Vide* the very lucid examples given in David Lewis: *We, the Navigators* and Thomas Gladwin: *East is a Big Bird*.

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ourselves can handle the same situations; we must become part of their life process. In other words, we must become them. Otherwise we cannot—or at most, in an approximative fashion—reach that apex of insight.

"Complexity" versus "Complication"

Instead of systems, we need to talk about the ever-changing *complexity* of the life process, and instead of equilibrium, about the *rhythms* which structure and restructure that process.

Natural, rhythmic complexity cannot be conceived of in mechanistic terms and cannot be quantified. When dealing with an intricate mechanoid system with many interconnected elements, I use the word *complication*.

Complication is a singular characteristic of machines and of the ideal control structures of the Industrial Growth Society. Complication can be defined and explained through the orderly, hierarchical schemes characteristic of Western academic science.

This is—in the final analysis—not possible with complexity and natural rythms, where we are dealing with the limitless multitude of reciprocally merging qualities and the gradual changes of boundaryless wholes. These are wholes where no governing center or definite behavioral starting point is to be found. The whole is governing itself.[2]

The only adequate approach to further our insight here is to use our whole range of human gifts and capabilities (including feeling and intuition) to strive for levels of enlightenment along several simultaneous paths, checking and rechecking one path against another as we go along. None of these paths—unfolding as our lives unfold—may be allowed to gain priority over the others. *One* such path may be to work in a certain academic field, using its characteristic methods, concepts, and models. Another path may be our own work on a farm. Yet another may be our engagement in ecopolitical struggle. A fourth one could be our poetic or artistic endeavors. A large portion of these paths should involve us deeply in projects where we do *not* have to control, because we want to *learn* about complex—i.e., inherently uncontrolled and uncontrollable—affairs (including ourselves). If we want to learn something about a river, we may do so from a safe position on the river bank. What we learn, however, will be limited and quite abstract. We will learn much more—and in a way that shakes our personalities—if we jump out into the river: we will learn something about ourselves. Without that, we cannot learn about our surroundings, for our selves are boundariless.

This is the kind of learning that we need if we want to change the destructive course of the Industrial Growth Society. We need to participate in social conflict situations—where we do *not* have "academic control"—to change ourselves so that our eyes are opened to what needs changing around us. □

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[2]Edward Goldsmith calls this "systemic control." I am not sure, however, if we are thinking of the same concept. The approach I am advocating is probably related to one presently emerging in modern physics (under—i.a.—the name of 'Bootstrap Theory'), according to Fritlof Capra (*The Tao of Physics*, Fontana/Collins, Bungay 1976). Capra finds parallels in Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism.

DAVE SMITH

PICKLES

Flying from the end of my
boot, my daughter's cat,
and the tame quail gone
up in a spatter of feathers,
to leave me turning there
as the dew dulls out, bare
shoulders flushed from that
quick sprint, the back door
still banging like a ripped
shred of memory, I think
I can hear the world grind.
Like a man in a sad car
that's just dropped something
to howl down a quiet street,
I am saying *Please, please*
and only mean I want to
go on wherever I am going,
and want the trees to remain
a close, shadowing green
tunnel without that light
banging hard overhead and
do not want, for God's sake,
to hear this slow gouging
of sparks that is the world,
the intense unloosening stare
in the cat's eyes as I loom
out of the sudden stillness,
the fixed and heart-dark
pupils of the child startled
to see what cruelty is, always
to know this first dream of
love's division. I am crying
Please, oh, please but not
wanting this to happen, this
sun the color of a cat to fall
on her struck face that is
learning to mouth these words
without end, with only
a beginning already long lost
like paw-printe or feather
where grass goes stunningly
dead, and sun, like flint, strikes.

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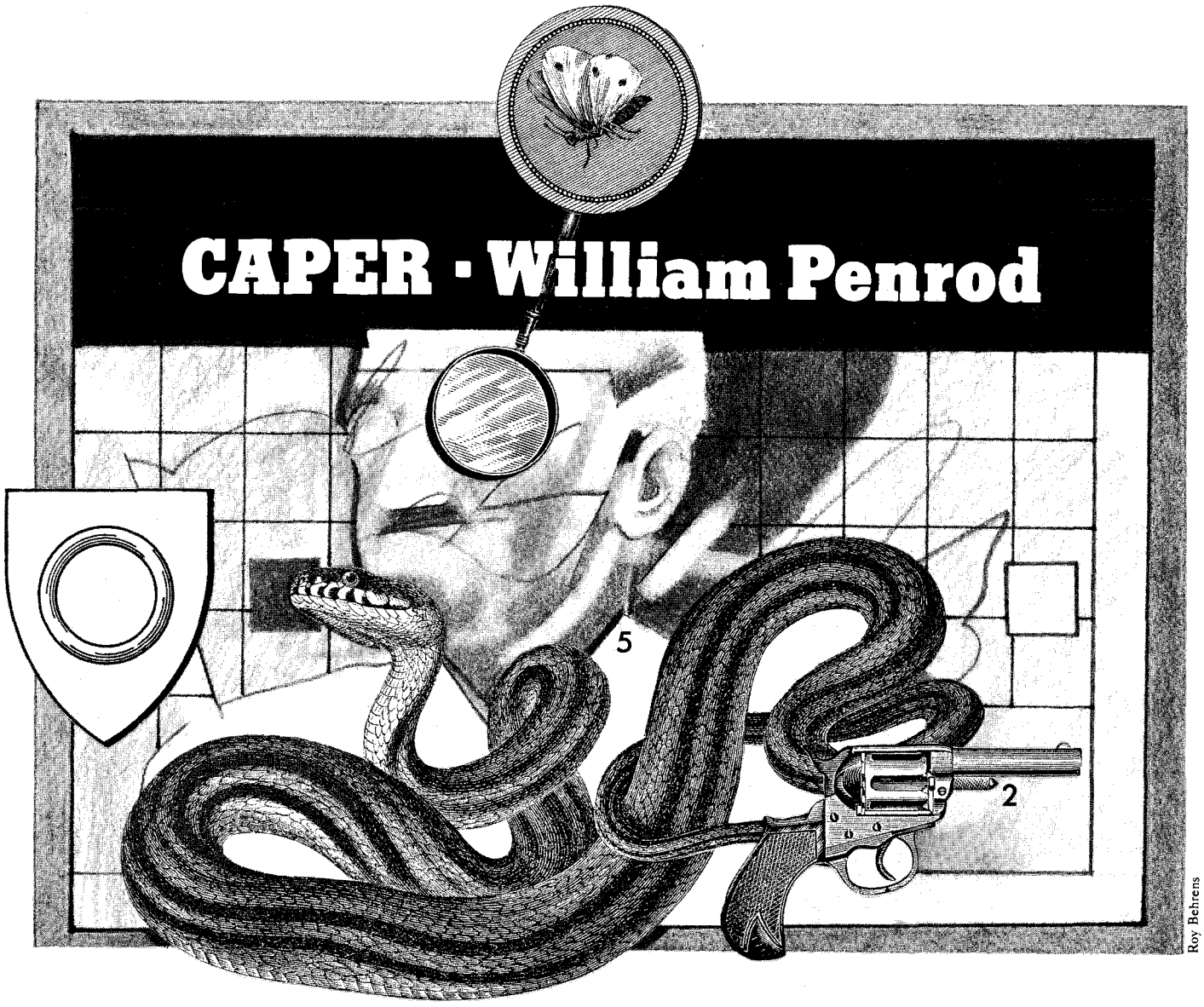
CAPER · William Penrod



Roy Behrens

I was in Ziggie's that time I decided to go to TheBigPayNow! employment agency and get a job as a private investigator. Then I was going to lead a useful life and write in the notebooks too. And before I ever went to TheBigPayNow! employment agency, I bought a special notebook and wrote about a case in that notebook, like I was already a private investigator, just so I could show Edgar Guest how really qualified I was to become one. Edgar Guest was the man who ran TheBigPayNow! employment agency.

And his ad said that he urgently needed qualified people to fill some of the many exciting job openings he had. His ad listed only a few of the many exciting job openings he had too. His ad said he urgently needed qualified people who could become Executive Aides, Executive Trainees, and Executives. Superintendents, Supervisors, and Secret Couriers. TV Anchor Men, Talk Show Hosts, and Movie Critics. Guides For Safaris, Dance Instructors, and Foreign Correspondents. Companions For Heiresses, Student Princes, and Wine Tasters. Masseurs For Stewardesses, Used Car Salesmen, and Private Investigators.

Edgar Guest's ad was in TheHammondPaper and I was just sitting there, next to the juke box, drinking beer, when I saw it and decided to go there and get a job as a private investigator. Edgar Guest's ad started out saying, in big black letters, that failure was caused by being bogged down on the wrong job. It said: Put Failure Behind You! Come In And See Me Right Away! Get Started On The Road To Success NOW By Letting Me Place You On The Exciting BigPayNow! job That You Qualify For! Don't Delay! Come In And See Me Today! Free Counseling! Free Placement! Free Parking!

Then Edgar Guest's ad said where some of the exciting BigPayNow! job openings were. He had exciting BigPayNow! job openings everywhere and all of them started at twenty-five thousand a year and more. He had them in Miami Beach, Palm Springs, Beverly Hills, Acapulco, Swinging London Town, Monte Carlo, On The Riviera, Honolulu, Buenos Aires, everywhere, even on the waterfront.

And as soon as I finished reading TheBigPayNow! employment agency's ad, I could really *see* how it would be when I became a private investigator. Then I could really *see* how it would be when I was working on a case:

WILLIAM PENROD is making his second appearance in the NAR. He lives in Hammond, Indiana.

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and then how I would always write in a notebook about the case when I solved it.

And then Lana said there wasn't any doubt about it in her mind, that being a private investigator was really the kind of job that I should be doing. She said she just adored those kind of men too. "Yes, darling," she said then, "I just adore those kind of men! You know, they make a girl feel so secure!

"And, darling, I always think of them as really being knights in shining armor because they're always there to help whoever is in distress!

"Yes, I know that they often appear to be nothing but rough and tough, but just look under those rough and tough exteriors and you'll find the only real knights in shining armor left in the world today! I just don't know what *some* people would have done without them!

"You know, darling, a lady in a little trouble can always turn to them when she has nowhere else to go!"

And then I started *feeling* and even *acting* like I was already a private investigator. I even *sounded* like one then. When I wanted another beer then, I always said something to Ziggie like, "Put a head on this, pal! Can't fly on just one wing, pal!" Then I just sat there, next to the juke box, drinking beer, *seeing* how it would be when I did become a private investigator; and acting like I was already one.

Then I carefully observed everybody too. Then I observed that Ziggie always tightened his belt before he got another drink for somebody; that Old Pete, the pensioner, always rubbed the handle of his cane just before he ordered another beer; and that Stash Benkowski always stacked his change into neat piles; and then always knocked the piles over when somebody new came through the door.

And when I was going home, I carefully observed a very suspicious looking man who was leaning against a telephone pole. He was wearing brown pants, a gray coat, a blue shirt, a black hat, white socks, and black shoes. The shoes were scuffed and one heel was coming loose and there were two buttons missing from his coat. He had green eyes, brown hair, a gold tooth, a small scar on his chin; and a missing finger on his right hand. And I just kept on observing that suspicious looking man, filing everything I saw away for future use, just like a really good private investigator would do, until he finally ran away. He ran down the alley and then hid behind a parked car.

And when I went into TheDrugStore to buy that special notebook, I *sounded* and *talked* like I was already a private investigator. When the brown eyed high school girl working there got the notebook for me, I just said to her, "Don't bother putting it in a bag, sweetheart! Naw, I don't need a bag, sweetheart! Yeah, sweetheart, no bag!"

And when I got home, I carefully observed my aunt. Then I observed that my aunt always stirred her coffee from left to right; and that she always squeezed the sugar bowl when she was talking. When I got home, she was talking about how good my cousin knew his TV.

"Stanley," she was saying then, "he really knows his TV good! This morning, he was the only one that got every one of them melodies right on that show, *MoneyForMelodies!*

"He knew every one of them melodies an' before anybody else did too! If he hadda been on that show, their big tenth anniversary show, he wouldda won a bran' new car for every day in the week! He wouldda won seven bran' new cars! That's the biggest prize they give!

"An' he wouldda qualified to come back for the big new champion of champions playoffs too, if he hadda been on that show! They're gonna have all the champions come back so they can have a champion of champions!

"Stanley, he really knows his TV good!"

And then I told my mother that I was going to get a steady job the very next day. I didn't tell her what kind of steady job I was going to get. I just said that I was finally going to get the kind of job that I really should be doing.

"I feel so much better now," my mother said, crying then.

My aunt didn't say anything. She just sat there, stirring her coffee from left to right, but when I was in my room, I heard her say, "Just like *his* father!"

And as soon as I was in my room, I started writing about a case in that special notebook, like I was already a private investigator. I called that case: *The Mr. Wealthy Caper* and it started out:

It was a typical day. A blue haze hung over the city like a rejected lover and its noxious presence permeated my office. The rent was overdue and the landlord's third notice had come with the morning mail. I took care of him first. I stuffed the eight losing tickets I'd picked up at the track the day before into an envelope and tossed them onto Maggie's desk. "Here, sweetheart," I growled, "send these to him! Maybe he can do something with them! Yeah, and tell him not to forget about the cockroaches either! They're his tenants too!"

Then the D.A. phoned. He was still on the warpath and threatened to have my license revoked the next time I got out of line. I threatened back. I always do. I threatened not to vote for him when he came up for election again. He made a strange, strangling noise and then slammed his end down. Hard. Very hard.

Yeah, maybe I should take that *Dale Carnegie course, because it looked like I'd stepped on too many important florsheims when I was working on* The Missing Starlet Caper. *The papers were still giving it a big play, telling how I'd cracked the case and how the head man at Epic Pictures was on his way to the gas chambers.*

And Ambrose Wealthy was on his way over to see me and I had a headache. It was either the scotch; or the blonde. I didn't know. The three of us had gotten together in a bar near the track and had ended up in a motel somewhere on Sepulveda. I couldn't even remember the blonde's name. Just that she had been one of the dancers in the bar. Topless and bottomless.

The throbbing inside my head increased. It sounded like Secretariat was in there, pounding home down the backstretch. I needed breakfast and had the usual. I spilled out a handful of aspirins, washed them down with a tumbler of rye, lit a fresh cigarette; and sipped on a cup of scalding hot black coffee. Maggie hovered nearby, clucking like a mother hen.

"Show him in when he gets here, sweetheart," I growled when the coffee had begun to burn away the poison.

Ambrose Wealthy was old money and Ivy League. We had never crossed paths. It was said that the first Ambrose Wealthy

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had been there, waiting at the dock when the Mayflower landed. Anyway, that's how far back they went and that's when the first Wealthy Hotel opened its doors for business, but now their chain and corporate holdings extended, like a giant octopus, all over the world. I remembered that there'd been some hushed talk about the present Ambrose Wealthy's mob connections a few years back, but now he was being touted as the state's next Governor and a better than even money bet to make it all the way to the Presidency.

But the first Joe Tough came over on a cattle boat and shoveled coal in one of the Wealthy controlled mills back in Pittsburgh. He died on the job. No doubt about it. We traveled in different circles. When Maggie ushered him in, I was working on the second cup of coffee. I'd finished the bottle of rye. And the throbbing inside my head had subsided to a dull roar.

"You've come highly recommended, Mr. Tough," he said, smiling that wolfish smile I'd seen so often on the ten o'clock news.

"So, I do have some friends out there," I replied, managing a grin as I exhaled a cloud of blue smoke.

"You're a modest man, Mr. Tough. I admire that."

"What can I do for you, Mr. Wealthy?"

Ambrose Wealthy's pink face turned dark. He leaned forward and spoke in hushed tones. "It's about my wife," he said then, "I'm afraid some harm will come to her."

Then with a well manicured finger, he pushed a thick envelope towards me. "A—uhhhh—retainer, Mr. Tough. There have been some—uhhh—threats, Mr. Tough, and I want you to see to it that nothing happens to her.

"I want to hire your services, Mr. Tough. To be blunt, I want you to protect her."

"This sounds more like a job for the police, Mr. Wealthy," I replied, leaning back, sipping tentatively on the coffee.

"Yes, I agree," he nodded nervously, "but—I—I—uhhhh—didn't want to alarm Amanda, Mr. Tough. She knows nothing of the threats. I—uhhhh—didn't want her to worry. You know, Mr. Tough, I'm quite devoted to Amanda. You understand, don't you, Mr. Tough?"

Amanda Blake Wealthy had been one of New York's highest paid fashion models a few years back. She'd made the cover of all the top magazines and had been on the verge of a very promising movie career when she suddenly decided to chuck it all and marry the present Ambrose Wealthy. Yeah, I understood all right. All those pictures of her that I'd cut out of the magazines still hung on the wall of my room. Yeah, I'd had quite a schoolboy crush on Amanda Blake Wealthy.

"You've just hired yourself a boy, Mr. Wealthy," I said, grinning foolishly.

"Good, good, good," Ambrose Wealthy sighed wearily then, "keep a close watch on her, Mr. Tough. See that no harm comes to her. She'll be leaving for the beach house in the morning. She goes there every weekend. She paints. She's quite good, you know."

I got there early; parked my battered Chevie in front of the Wealthy Estate and waited, watching through a pair of binoculars, until Amanda Blake Wealthy showed. When she did, it wasn't a disappointment. Amanda Blake Wealthy was still a thoroughbred and all the way. The face was strictly for launching ships; the taffy colored hair was filled with sunshine; and the legs were long and perfectly formed. When the red Bentley pulled out, I followed, quietly whistling a happy aria from my favorite opera.

But it was all too neat. I kept adding up the two's and two's, and coming up with fives. Something was wrong. I could feel it. It was just a hunch, but I pulled the Chevie over and waited and then I saw him. Big Vito! Big Vito was playing tag with the red Bentley too!

Big Vito was a for-hire killer out of Detroit who had probably got his start by pulling the wings off butterflies and kicking the crutches out from under cripples. Anyway, the sheet on Big Vito went all the way back to his grade school days. He was nine years old then and they said he had beaten an old lady to death for the $1.97 in her handbag. But Big Vito had known all about alibis even then. His was air tight and when they released him, Big Vito graduated. First the knife and then the gun and now his alibis were even tighter and his price for murder had gone up.

And then I began to piece it together. It was a setup and I was the pigeon! I accelerated the Chevie, took the Canyon Road, and arrived at the beach house five minutes in front of Amanda Blake Wealthy. I waited for her inside.

There wasn't any time for formal introductions and I spelled it out for her fast. Amanda Blake Wealthy filled in the gaps. Sobbing, she told me how she had come across some of Ambrose Wealthy's private papers that proved that he had been using his position to siphon off money intended for poor people, sick people, and old people. Her life was in danger because she was insisting that he give the money back. She even told me why she married Ambrose Wealthy. She had married him because he held the I.O.U.'s her brother had lost, gambling in a rigged game in a casino run by the mob.

Then we were interrupted by the sounds of Big Vito's footsteps in the hallway. When the door swung open, he was standing there, an evil smile spread across his gorilla face, a snub nosed revolver in his hairy fist, but I was ready for him.

The revolver scooted across the floor when I brought my hand down hard across his arm. I heard the arm snap, like a piece of rotten timber. And then I dug my left deep, just above the belt, into his stomach, and crossed my right hand hard into his startled face. The bone and gristle of his nose melted away, but a white rage drove me on and I kept on banging my fists into that evil punk face.

When I finished, Big Vito was lying there and the claret was gushing from his mouth and nose, but I didn't stop. Then I ground his killer hands under the heels of my shoes. Yeah, he wouldn't be hiring out those deadly hands anymore. In the background, I could hear Amanda Blake Wealthy crying softly.

Ambrose Wealthy's face turned ghostly white. He suddenly become an old man. A very old man. Helpless. The wailing sirens sounded in the distance. They were coming for him. I only felt contempt for him. "Don't try anything foolish," I warned him, "it's all over now."

He held his head in his hands. "I—I—I wanted to be President," he mumbled, "I—I—wanted to become a King. It—it—it—was my right—I wanted to—"

Amanda Blake Wealthy was waiting for me in the dim light. The exotic musk she wore guided me to her. She fought back the tears and waited. I put my arms around her. She was silent. Then she lifted her lips to mine.

"I'm so glad you came back, Joe," she said then, "I'm so glad you came back, Joe!"

And the next morning I went to TheBigPayNow! employment agency early so I could get a job as a private

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investigator. Then I took that special notebook with me too, but Edgar Guest never did look at it. When I got there, he said that I would have to wait until he went out and got a little breakfast before we could get down to business. "I'm not worth a dime," he said, sighing then, "until I've had a little breakfast."

When I got there, he had just finished sweeping his office floor and was putting the broom away in the closet. Then he folded up the cot that he slept on and put it away in the closet too. "I always like to tidy up a bit," he said, still sighing, "before I go out and get a little breakfast. That's what I always did in the army. When I was in the army, I always tidied up a bit before I went out to get a little breakfast. I won't be gone too long."

But before he went, Edgar Guest gave me the form that I would have to fill out before he could send me on one of the exciting BigPayNow! jobs he had. He said that it was the same form that the army used and that he always liked filling it out when he was in the army; and that I might as well be filling it out while he went to get a little breakfast.

"It's real easy to fill out," Edgar Guest said then, "just put down all the answers where it says. In the army, they always used to give us that form to fill out when we needed a new pair of socks or somethin' and I always liked fillin' out that form better than any of the others. And it's real easy too. Just put down all the answers where it says."

And when Edgar Guest left, I started putting down all the answers where it said to on that form. Then I put down where I was born, when I was born; and the names of three people who knew me since then and would say nice things about me. I put down everything I did since I was born, where I did it, who I did it for; and why I wasn't doing those things anymore. And then I put down where and when my father and mother were born, and everything they ever did after that. I put down everything it said to on that form. I even put down that I wanted three pairs of white socks.

And when Edgar Guest came back, I had just finished putting down all the answers where it said to on that form. When Edgar Guest came back, he was carrying a large carton of hot coffee. Then he sat down at his desk, took an old bag of cookies out of one of the drawers, dunked one of the cookies in the coffee, and then carefully put the soft cookie into his mouth. "I'm not worth a dime until I've had a little breakfast," Edgar Guest sighed then, his mouth filled with soft cookie, "I used to have a coffee pot and didn't have to go out and get a little breakfast, but it's broke now. When I get some money, I'm going to get another one and then I won't have to go out and get a little breakfast.

"But what I'd really like to get when I get some money is one of those hot plates and a nice little fryin' pan and maybe even one of those little ice boxes to keep things in. Then I could have a really good breakfast every morning as soon as I finished tidying up. I could have anything I wanted too. I could have bacon and eggs then; or pancakes; or even oatmeal.

"That would be really nice. They used to give us oatmeal a lot when I was in the army and I really liked that. You could have all you wanted too, but then they always gave us really good breakfasts in the army. When I was in the army, I always went to breakfast early, as soon as I was finished tidying up a bit, and sometimes I would get to go through the line three or four times before they closed it down.

"You know, I'm not worth a dime until I've had a little breakfast and that was really nice, just goin' through that line and gettin' all that oatmeal. But I guess I liked the pancakes they gave us in the army better than anything. If I knew they was goin' to give us pancakes when I was in the army, sometimes I'd stay up all night just so I could be the first one in line.

"That was really nice because they gave us real good pancakes in the army. And then they even started givin' me pancakes to take back with me. When they made too many, then they'd just give 'em to me and then I could take 'em back and just keep 'em under my bunk.

"That was really nice. Then whenever I wanted a little breakfast, all I had to do was just reach down under my bunk and have me one of them pancakes. That was really nice. Then I could have a little breakfast anytime I wanted to.

"And then they started givin' me other things to take back too and keep under my bunk. They even gave me oatmeal and scrambled eggs and sausages and toast to keep under my bunk. That was really nice. Then when I wanted a little breakfast, I could just reach down under my bunk and have anything I wanted. That was really nice."

But they finally made Edgar Guest get out of the army because of all those breakfasts that he kept under his bunk. "I keep tryin' to get back in," Edgar Guest said, really sighing then, "I keep writin' to 'em every week, askin' 'em to take me back in because I haven't had a really good breakfast since I got out of the army. You know, I'd give anything to have breakfast in the army just once more."

Then Edgar Guest started talking again about some of the really good breakfasts he'd had in the army. But when he finally finished drinking the coffee that he brought back, he said that we could get down to business. Then he just wrote down a name on a card, handed it to me, and said, "Go there. I think they need a barber or something. Yes, go there and don't forget to give me some money as soon as you get the job. If you gave me some money, then maybe I could go out and have a really nice breakfast somewhere."

Edgar Guest never did say anything about the form I'd filled out; or ask about that special notebook. It was on his desk and I even sent messages with my mind to him, telling him to ask about the notebook. *Ask about the notebook, ask about the notebook, ask about the notebook,* I kept telling him over and over then, but he never did.

I thought he was going to. When I was leaving, I thought he was going to, but he didn't. Then he just started talking some more about the really good breakfasts he'd had in the army. His eyes were closed and he was smiling and he said, "They really gave some good breakfasts in the army. They were really nice. I sure wish the army would take me back so I could have a really good breakfast again." □

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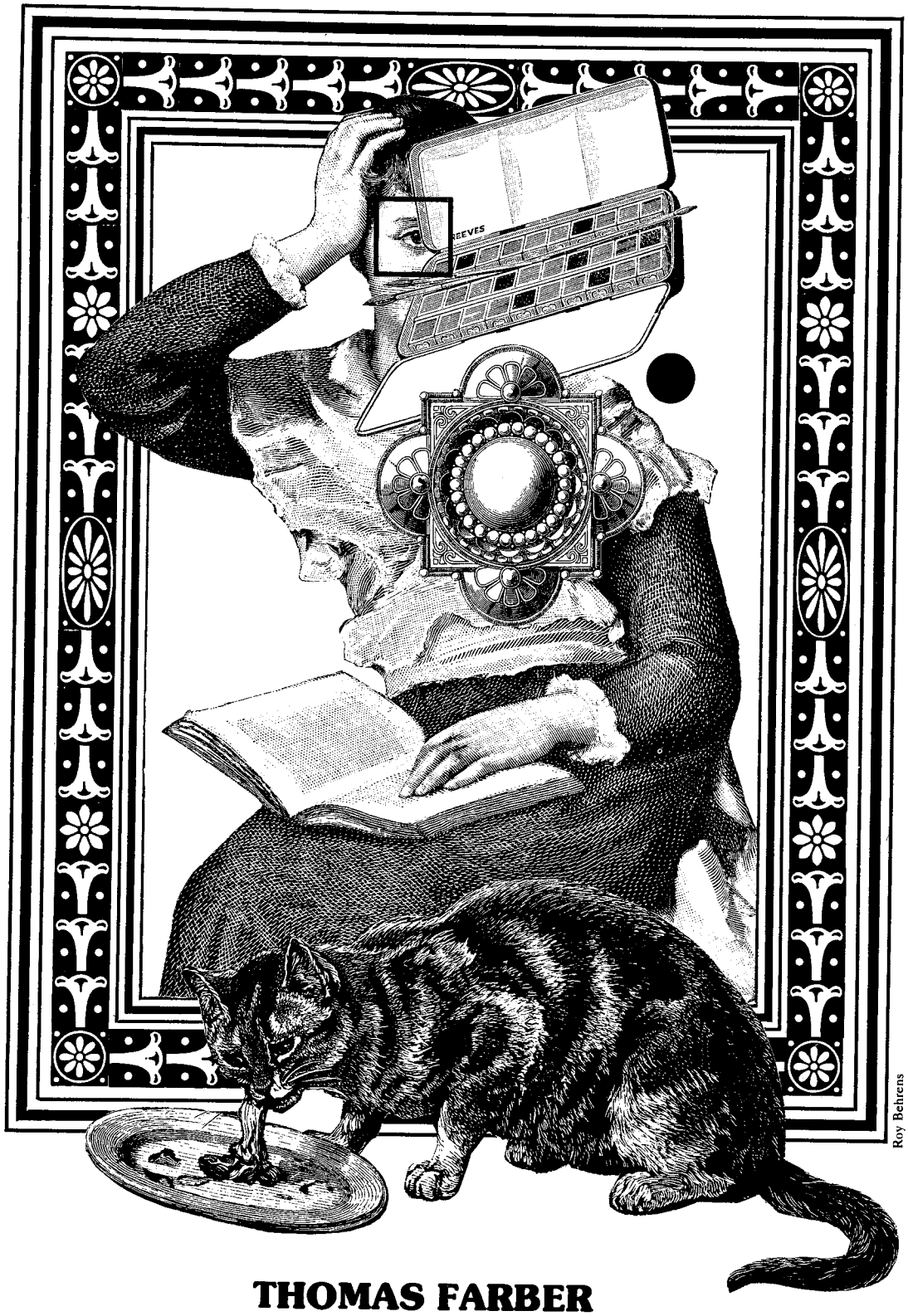
THE TOM IN PARTICULAR



Roy Behrens

THOMAS FARBER

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THOMAS FARBER will have a short story collection published by Dutton in the spring of 1980. He lives in California.

The cats were pushing for dinner as though they had God on their side, making no allowance for the shift the night before off daylight-saving time. The orange tom, having earlier suffered the ignominy of being shooed out for nagging, dropped off the garage roof (from which he could survey most of the human movement in the cottage) onto the redwood fence, sailed to the ground when he reached the gate, and sprinted through the cat door into the kitchen. Arriving at the threshold of the living room with heartfelt urgency, convinced at the very least by his own velocity: surely it was time to eat.

Though the two other cats—the huge tortoise-shell female and her much smaller black-haired mother—spatted obligingly as the tom made his entrace (their strategy being to demonstrate that only hunger pains could drive them to such uncharacteristic squabbling), their mistress was too preoccupied to pay them any mind. She was unpacking, finally, the trunks, bags, and suitcases she'd brought back from her parents' home, the welter of childhood baubles, inherited valuables, and flea-market finds she'd left there the nearly ten years she'd been on her own.

She'd always insisted that nothing of hers be thrown out, arguing long distance more than once against her mother's resolve to "clean up the children's rooms once and for all." It was not until her parents announced their decision to give up the house for an apartment, however, that she'd gone to fetch what was hers.

Of course she had always kept with her some few treasures. A black cashmere overcoat, once her mother's. Two Mesopotamian spun-gold earrings that tinkled like bells when she wore them. A necklace of black seed pearls given to her grandfather by fishermen on the river Don. And several silver buckles, from a belt of her grandmother's, each engraved with a maiden in profile (right hand cradling a crescent moon, left bearing a garland of lilies).

But at last, now twenty-seven, she finally had all her things again. "Market value four hundred dollars, tops," her husband said from the soft chair in the corner. Newspaper in his lap, shaking himself awake to survey the unpacking.

"Oh stop it, will you," she said, thinking she'd just as soon be alone. "You don't even know what these things are."

"Artifacts from a previous incarnation? Salvage from Pompeii?"

"Is that supposed to be funny?" she responded sharply. "I don't need to hear it." Just looking at the work ahead made her want quiet and space; she found her husband's voice particularly intrusive. It would help considerably if he—and the cats—just disappeared for a while.

"Sorry. No offense," he said.

Unable to tell from the tone of her husband's voice if he meant it, or if his grin was really apologetic, wondering why she even had to try to figure him out, she glared in his direction. Even this took her far from her thoughts.

"I said I'm sorry. I meant it."

"O.K., O.K. Forget it. I'm busy."

Shaking her head, finding none of her husband's tricks amusing, her mind teased by the rush of associations each object summoned up, she walked over to the stereo. Putting on her father's favorite, Stravinsky's *Firebird*, which she'd heard so many times as a child, Pachebel's *Canon in D* ready to follow, wearing white tights, a black leotard, and black tooled cowboy boots, she began to cull the jumble into three categories.

CLOTHING

A grey linen schoolgirl's jumper, at least fifteen years old, which still fit her. A sleeveless cotton tennis shirt. A poor-boy sweater with jewel neckline knitted by her sister. Two pairs of straight-leg corduroy pants. "Way too short for my father. Mother got them in a thrift shop."

"What?" her husband said, busy in the sports page, unable to tell if she was talking to him or to herself.

"Nothing."

Jodhpurs with leather kneepads. A visored riding helmet covered in black velvet. Leather pants. "Ruined," she thought, remembering how, years before, she'd waded into a saltwater pond when the family's German shepherd had fallen through the ice. And then stood shivering in the cold, watching the dog, memory so short, chasing a cormorant down the beach, while she'd wondered if the pants could be saved. Now, holding them up, inspecting them carefully, she was sure they were finished.

She pressed on. A sky blue velvet dressing gown with an Elizabethan collar. Two mutton-sleeved bodices: one red silk, the other forest green taffeta with ivory cuffs and dickey. Anderson tartan Bermuda shorts. A silk Anderson dress tartan scarf, with bits cut from it. Rosettes for her grandmother's grave.

A skirt of French ribbon grosgrain. A mustard seersucker peasant skirt and blouse. Pleated cream crepe evening pants. An English wool houndstooth jacket. A pair of turn-of-the-century silk ladies' drawers. Her mother's old bathing suit: flowered pleated rayon with full skirt and fitted bodice. Bright pink.

A pinafore with whale spouting. A brick-red Ferragamo knit suit, never worn. A white terrycloth beach jacket. A pencil-cut purple raincoat. A natural raw silk overcoat, also her mother's.

Chartreuse linen shorts. A Georgian flannel dress with lace collar. An A-line unbleached muslin wraparound skirt, with buttonholes in the shape of dolphins. A velour hat, cabbage green. "I'd never wear something like this, would I?" Her husband, dozing off again, was slow to respond. "Would I?"

"Would you what?"

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MATERIAL

Black crepe with embroidered silver clouds. Strawberries, lots of them, on a circular flowered patchwork. Organdy and piqué patchwork, all in different whites. Swaths of voile and poplin. French silk organdy, cloud blue with salmon polka dots. "The color of St. Joseph's Aspirin for Children," she thought. Blue cloth flowers. Satin ribbons. Sequins. A lace butterfly.

Several yards of Chinese linen, small golden horses crossing at full gallop. "It hung over my bed when my room was yellow. I was a horse maiden."

"How old are horse maidens?"

"Are you awake now?"

"More or less."

"I was eleven or twelve. That's horse-maiden age. I had to ride an enormous pinto. Cherokee. He was almost impossible to control. He gave me nightmares. He had a hard mouth."

"What's that?"

"You could rein in hard, but he'd keep on going, biting the horse in front of you. Then that horse would wheel or kick. Cherokee was more like a pony."

"What's wrong with ponies?"

"They're vicious and ornery, cunning, they don't respond easily. Cherokee was full of tricks. He'd rear when you put a foot in the stirrup. Or try to nip the person who was giving you a leg up. When he got too far out of control, my teacher would come over and poke at him with a pointed stick."

"Why did you ride him, then?"

"I had to. It was my teacher's way of making me learn not to give in to a horse. I was always scared of Cherokee, but even so he was a beautiful animal. I loved him."

"Pre-pubescent maidens turned on by their noble steeds?"

"Very funny."

USABLES (AND SOME OTHER THINGS)

Damask curtains. Moss green linen sheets, soft and worn like flannel. A wicker laundry hamper. "I'm going to paint it white. It should be white." Several silk lamp shades. Red tumbleweed from the Mojave Desert.

Bags of metal shavings (curls of copper and brass). Scissors from Finland. All sorts of biscuit tins, tall and cylindrical, from Fortnum and Mason's or Jackson's of Picadilly. Three Dundee marmalade jars. A picture frame of plaster—painted to look like wood—set on wood, with ailanthus leaves engraved. A pair of finger cymbals for belly dancing. An ornate silver pomegranate.

"What can you do with that?" her husband asked.

"With what?"

"The artificial fruit."

"The pomegranate?"

"If that's what it is. Why does it go with the usables?"

"It's good for storing things in. Like hairpins."

"Oh."

A needlepoint pincushion, filled with sand. Eaton's cards, embossed with her name, for thank-you cards her mother had to force her to write. A box of perfumed dusting powder, with puff.

Ernest Thompson Seton's *Rascal*. *The Peregrine*, by J.A. Baker. A guide to ferns. *The Art of the Japanese Kite*. Four books on coyotes. And an enormous index, with watercolor illustrations, of North American wildflowers.

Cans of oatmeal, a gift from her mother. Not to be eaten, but to be used instead of soap (packed with a bottle of vinegar for restoring the pH balance to the skin). And from her father, a recording of Donizetti's opera *Betly*.

"Betly's a beautiful girl who spurns her lover."

"Sounds depressingly familiar."

"But she accepts him, finally."

"Then there's hope?"

She paused in her sifting, exhausted. Too much of the past had been opened up, and, with her husband in the room, the present was too well represented. She'd have to take it much slower. In the morning, when he was out of the house. As it was, she'd made it through less than half her things.

Still in the corner in the soft chair, newspaper at his feet, her husband was staring at the disorder as if trying to find something—negative, she thought—to say.

"What's the matter?" she asked.

"Nothing. I was just wondering when you're going to have this mess cleaned up."

"Is that really what's on your mind?"

"No."

"Then what?"

"I've given you lots of things too."

"I know that," she answered, startled to find tears welling in her eyes. "I remember."

"Well I forgot. Particularly looking at all your stuff."

"But I didn't."

"Then let's pile everything I've given you in the living room too."

"What? Now?"

"Come on, come on, give me a hand."

HER HUSBAND'S GIFTS (A PARTIAL LIST)

Three authentic Indian baskets. A treadle sewing machine. One pair of Red Wing Irish Setter work boots. A book of plates of Georgia O'Keefe's paintings. One down parka, one down sleeping bag. A set of foul-weather gear, including Captains Courageous rain hat. An electric juicer. One rigging knife, one Swiss army knife. An oriole's nest. A wasp's nest. A duck's wing. A set of salmon's teeth. The sound track from *Saturday Night Fever*. A recording of Bach's suites for cello. "And there's lots more," he said as the pile grew, "not counting the roses for your last birthday. Let me think."

Still not fed, the cats practiced the feline equivalent of Zen meditation: tortoise-shell haunched on the wicker hamper; her black-haired mother curled on the damask; orange tom camped on the chartreuse shorts. The tom in particular despaired that the inventory would ever end. □

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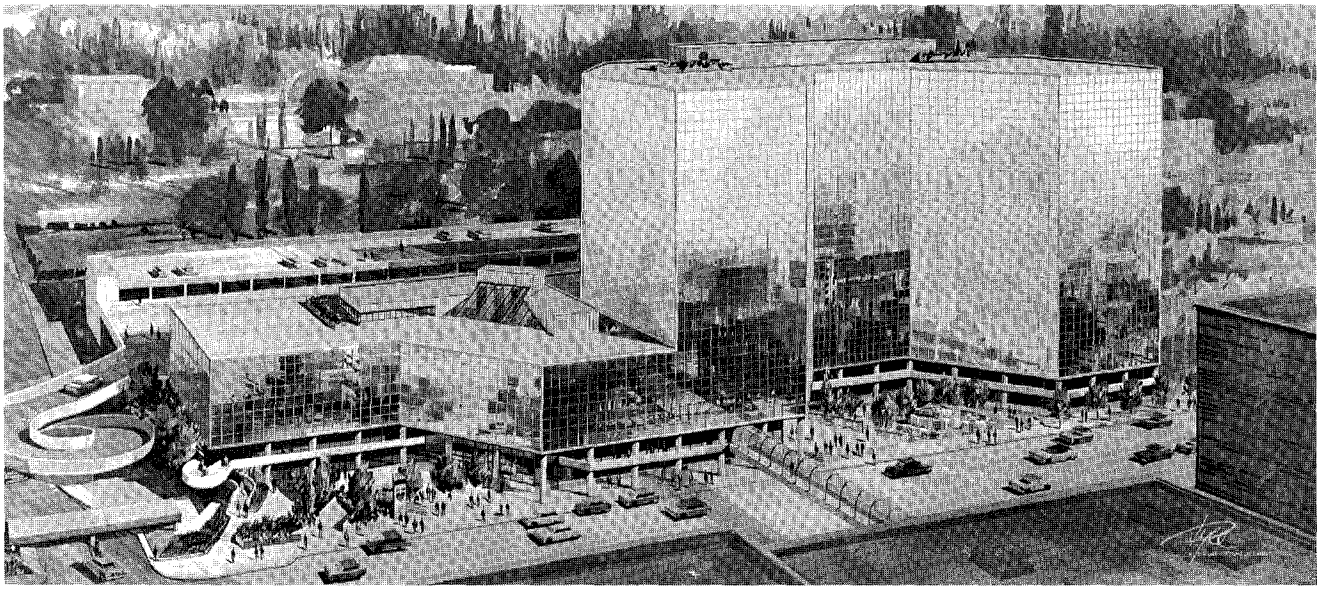

In fifteen years this office building will pay for itself entirely out of energy savings....

The building is Gulf Canada Square, an office complex-shopping mall in downtown Calgary, Alberta, Canada; its owner is Gulf Canada, its developer and manager is the Canada Square Corporation, of Toronto. Using a heat recovery system that requires no furnace, Gulf Canada Square will be cooled in the summer and heated in the winter with one-fourth the energy consumed by the most energy efficient building in the United States. Read on:

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"We only do one big building at a time. . . . We like to learn from previous buildings . . . even during construction. I mean: Are we wasting space? Wasting space is wasting energy. . . ."

—Kenneth R. Cooper

The most energy-efficient office building in the United States in 1978 was the IBM building in Chicago; it used 141,000 BTUs per square foot per year. In New York City some office buildings use as much as 223,000 BTUs per square foot per year. And—so we are told—about half of all that energy used to heat and cool office buildings in the U.S. is sheer waste.

Compare a building in Toronto, Hydro Place (see page 48), whose energy consumption last year was 56,800 BTUs per square foot. And imagine Gulf Canada Square, an almost-finished building in Calgary, Alberta, whose energy use will be around 35,000 BTUs. Neither of these latter buildings has a furnace; both are heated and cooled by a system which uses whatever heat is created by the lights and machines and bodies that occupy any large office building—a system which holds temperatures throughout these buildings at 73°, 10 hours a day, five days a week, 52 weeks a year. It is a system whose energy savings *are equal in the 35th year to the total construction cost of the building itself. And though there is nothing magical or mysterious about heat recovery systems, this one owes its success to a development company called Canada Square, and to its energy conservation branch, Encon.*

Canada Square, based in Toronto, designs, builds, and then operates its projects for a long period of time—in the case of Hydro Place, 30 years; of Gulf Canada Square, 35 years. At the end of that time the building is turned over to its owner. Ontario Hydro will purchase Hydro Place for one dollar; Gulf Oil Corporation already owns its building and will take back the management duties. Both are large buildings—1.3 million and 2 million square feet respectively—and Canada Square is presently plannino a 2 million square foot building in Dallas, with other possible office projects being talked about for Providence and San Francisco.

We are, of course, no engineering magazine, no architectural journal—but we are always attracted to excellence, so late in the spring of this year we sat in the Encon office of that group's chief architect, Kenneth R. Cooper, and chatted for an hour about energy, esprit, politics, business, and the future of the world. What follows are Mr. Cooper's words, drawn verbatim from our conversation.—The Editors

On the Conservation of Energy:

It takes more thinking, and most professionals get paid on a fee basis; less thinking, more money—fine. If they have to do a lot of thinking and keep the cost down at the same time, their fee goes down. So why think? It's a hell of a thing to say about a profession, but the architects and the engineers are in the same boat: the payment system is backwards. It should be a fixed amount on a fixed budget and anything you save below that—great. If it goes over that, you don't get paid for it. So you're not going to get any brownie points for going over it; you get good brownie points for going under it. We had to start giving some premium to thinkers. We need to.

We'll have to keep on working to find something better—more efficient equipment, maybe; more efficient design. We're not quite sure yet, but there must be something. When you come down from roughly 100 kilowatt hours per square foot per year to, say, ten, you've come down a long way. But to get 90% off that last ten—that's going to be hard to do. We have to go in reverse and generate enough power to give it away. The incinerator [at Gulf Canada Square] helps quite a bit, and maybe it can be better, too. We threw a lot of heat and a lot of energy away from the incinerator because of the codes. I think there are better ways of doing that, too, and we're looking for them. There's four hundred degrees going out the top of that incinerator, just being thrown out in the atmosphere. Now that's a lot of energy. I think we can get it down more than that. It creates condensation problems when we start bringing that temperature down—we start rusting out—but then I think we can find better materials to line the stacks. I don't think we need four hundred degrees to cause that velocity to get up the stack; perhaps it would be cheaper to put a fan on and generate enough velocity. There's something to be found—somewhere. And as energy costs go up, that next 10% is going to be worth quite a bit of money.

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Some Insights into Canada Square/Encon: Commitment, Esprit, Restraint

It's a development corporation, but development is just one part of it. We develop our own buildings, we sell them to our tenants—if they want us to—or we just rent to them. Hydro Place is ours for thirty years; after thirty years they (Ontario Hydro) buy it for a dollar. The Gulf building, in Calgary, is theirs as soon as they move in. They pay for it outright at the beginning; we operate it for 35 years. We guarantee the energy consumption, on a yearly basis; they pay for their power only what they use, but never more than our guaranteed maximum. We manage the building—and we fix the price *at the beginning*, before we start. We had a guaranteed energy consumption, which was well above what we're doing now. It was based on what we did at Hydro, and that was set as a guideline for what we were going to do at Calgary. Of course we've improved what we did at Hydro, in Calgary, by about 60%.

We have a very small staff. We have a lot of key people—we bring extra designers and draftsmen in as we start our jobs. We bring them in to this office [in Toronto]. I don't like letting all the work go out—you can't control it. You give an outside architect a job to do, and you give an outside mechanical engineer something to do and an electrical engineer something to do—they never communicate. You can whip them as much as you want; they won't talk to each other. Communicate? They don't do it. And if *he's* out there, I can't control *him*, either. So I go back and forth. While I'm there, he's doing what I want; as soon as I leave, right back he goes into his old rut. Bring them all in here—they all bitch like hell, but they work better. And it works fine.

And none of our engineers are paid on a fee basis. They're paid on a fixed fee as a profit, and they work on a per diem rate from there on in. And if we make changes, that's fine—they don't care how many I make, and it's not off their back if I make changes. If they want to do some more research to find a better way—great; let's try it. It's only paper; let's blow it. A building won't be constructed for two or three years, and what we put on paper today is obsolete by the time it's ready to be built in. We like to stay flexible, to make changes and update our thinking up to the last moment.

Containment area for water storage tanks in Gulf building.

We do a lot of research work, and we're lucky enough that everybody around here likes what they're doing. They're working an average of something like 16 to 18 hours, seven days a week. They don't stop. And as long as you're enjoying it, it's fun. But you can only go so far before your wife says: "Come on. Have fun, but come home once in a while." So you can only go so far and be efficient anyway. We only have to worry about our own efficiency dropping down. We only do one big building at a time; we don't do five or six at once. We try to schedule ourselves so one is finishing off when the next one is getting started. And also we like to learn from the previous buildings all the time—what went wrong. Even during construction. I mean: are we getting too tight, or do we have some more space we can compact a bit more? Are we wasting space? Wasting space is wasting energy. . . . Anyway, we try to schedule a project every year-and-a-half or two years, depending on how large the next one is. Right now we're worried that we might get three or four of them at once—especially when it goes from Providence, Rhode Island, on that coast, and over to San Francisco on that side and Dallas down that way. That's a real merry-go-round.

Actually, we have one big asset that the rest of them don't have: we are a fully-integrated team. We design, build, and operate—and the hardest part is to get your designers to demand that the grease monkeys down in the machines tell you what's going on. Most people build it, the engineer walks away from it when it's finished and never sees what goes on after that; never sees the operating expenses, never sees the energy consumption figures in reality—they're always blown way up or way down, depending on whether it's for tax purposes or selling purposes or whatever they're doing with it. And we've got our people now that if we do something, they tell us about it—they tell us if we're right or if we're wrong. They tell us if we've forgotten something, or if we've put something in we don't need. When we started the Hydro building, we told them we set the guidelines as far as consumption was concerned at 55,000 BTUs. They laughed; they said there's no way you can keep them down that low. After six months of operation they came back and said: "We told you so; you were wrong—we're operating at 52,000." Now they also told us we put a lot of stuff in there we didn't need, and they told us we didn't put certain things in we should have—that overall we spent too much money on what we put in there. So in Gulf we modified—even to the point that we took certain automatic systems out because they said they were bored stiff. "We've nothing to do but sit here and do nothing all day long; give us something to do." All right; we took some of the automatic computer controls out and said: Now you set the guidelines for the operation. But also the guidelines are set so that the computer, if you try to do something wrong, says: "I'm sorry, look at it again, do it again." So they can't go *too* far.

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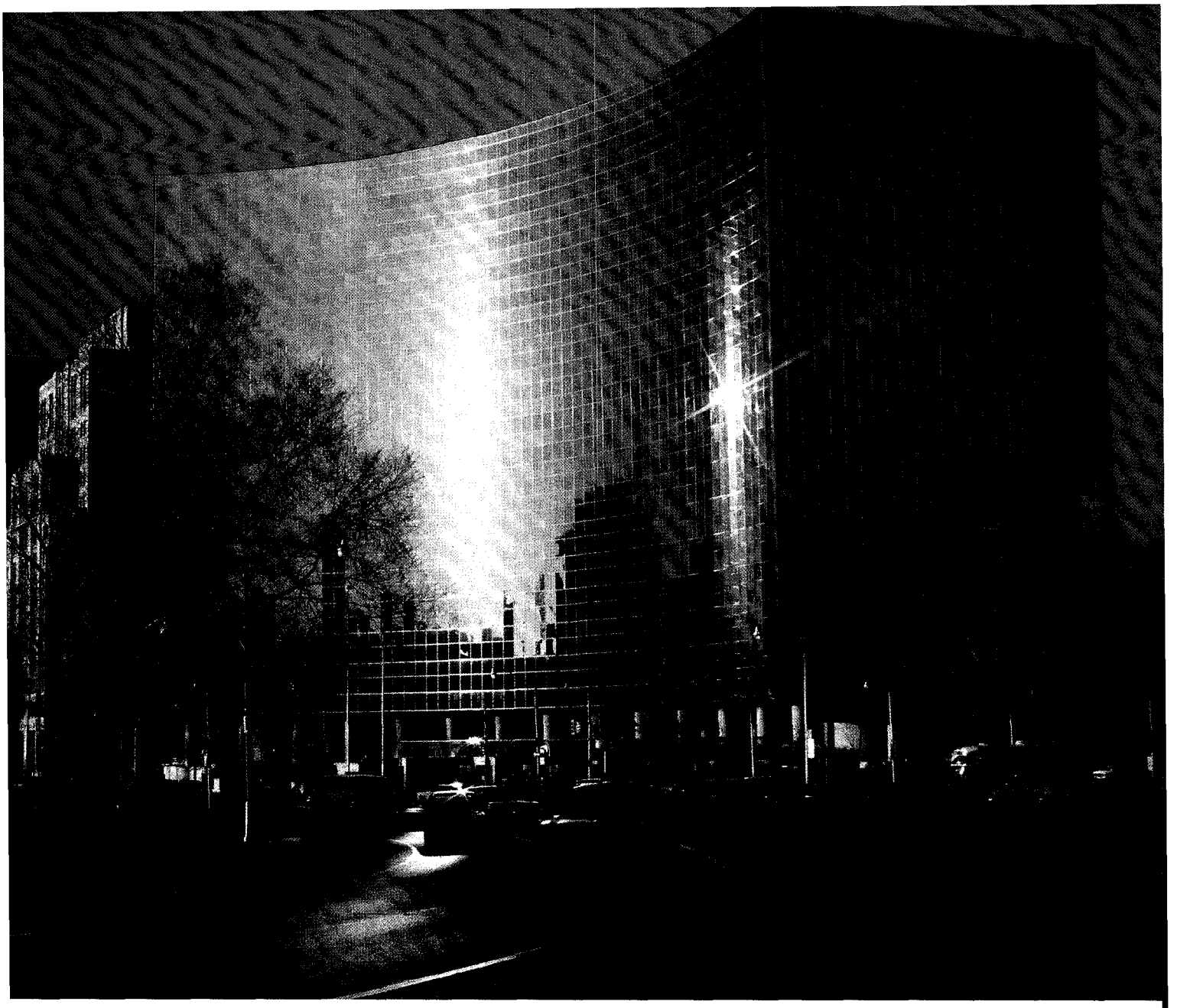

(Above) Hydro Place, built in Toronto by Canada Square for the government-operated utility, Ontario Hydro. Glass walls reflect 85% of the sun's rays (Gulf Canada Square, in Calgary, uses glass which reflects 92%), help prevent interior from overheating. Hydro Place uses less than half the energy required by the United States' most energy-efficient office building, and will pay for its construction costs out of energy savings in about 15 years.

(Right) Cutaway indicates construction features of building's heat recovery system. Note coffered ceilings which collect heat, 'defroster' effect of incoming air which acts as insulation against outside climate. Storage tanks for hot and cold water are in building's basement. Buildings like Hydro Place and Gulf Canada Square, whose heating/cooling equipment generate less than one watt per square foot, are exempt from the controls proposed under President Carter's energy plan.

On Thermostat Settings and Common Sense:

I think the Americans have got it down to the point where in the wintertime you're not supposed to set the thermostat above 68 degrees, and in the summertime you're to set it at 78 degrees. If somebody told *us* to set the thermostats in winter down to 68 degrees, we'd have to crank air-conditioning like hell to keep it cool. Sure, it's zero outside, but the building inside is an air-tight chamber and it's building up heat. So don't make us cool it to 68 degrees. We can maintain 78 degrees, in summer, easier than we can 68 degrees in the winter. If they've got a certain idea about what the settings should be, I guess they got it from going back to the old catalogs and figuring heat loss and other things like that. They forgot to think that heat loss may be an asset—which it is.

They say almost any house you walk into—it's hard to get it up to 78 degrees. You have to put your furnace on all the time, in the wintertime. But for an office building it's the other way around; you've got to cool it to get down to 68, and it will rise by itself to 78. In fact, if we turn the fans off at night while the cleaning staff are in there working, that room temperature in the office space will probably go up to 75, 76, 78 degrees. If you leave the lights on all night it could be 85 degrees or more because the buildings are air-tight.

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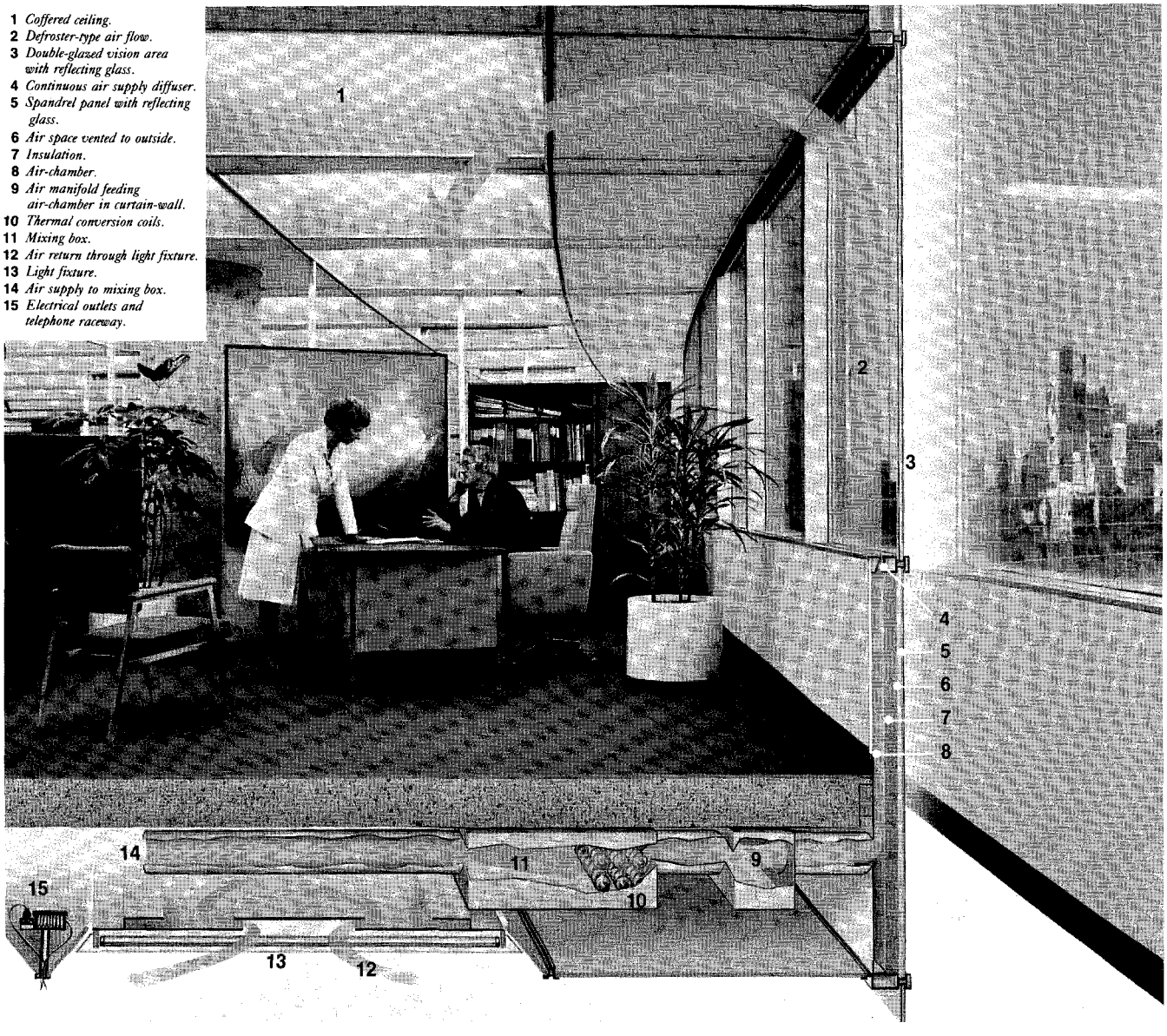
Two Cautionary Tales:

We were invited down to Princeton, of all places, to look at it, and we looked at their fuel bill. We said: If you give us your fuel bill—the same amount of money every year—we'll rejuvenate your total system, give you a far better system, and save a lot of power. And that's all we want: your fuel bill; we'll put all the new buildings up. Now they can put you on the moon, probably, in Princeton—they have enough research people—but they couldn't heat-manage their own space on the ground. . . . They're still thinking about it. It's a big pipe dream for them. But it can be done; the buildings are so inefficient and they have so much generating system on their research lab. Yet they're throwing all that heat away—and they're generating heat from those classrooms over here—and it's just a complete waste going out both ends.

* * *

Take the Federal Building, a government project. They have a central system in town supplying chilled water and hot water to an office building. That means they're bringing in hot water for the periphery area and cold water to cool the interior—which adds up to more heating and more cooling than necessary, and ends up with the excess heating and cooling going out the roof via the cooling towers. They're throwing power right out the top—a complete waste. If anybody stopped to think what it costs them for their power—they should all be shot, every one. And that building was built at the same time as Hydro. We went in there originally—it was a call for tender (bids) for developers, except they did all the drawings for us—and we discussed it with them; we went to two separate meetings and to the third one—we were never invited back. In the second meeting we told them how much the building was going to cost to operate if we managed it. We told them it was going to cost—including paying for the building—somewhere around six dollars a square foot per year. They said: That's for your management of heating and cooling. And we said: No, that's *everything*. They just looked at us, and we were never invited back—mainly because all the buildings they operate, and they're one of Canada's biggest landlords, are costing probably about six


1 Coffered ceiling.
2 Defroster-type air flow.
3 Double-glazed vision area with reflecting glass.
4 Continuous air supply diffuser.
5 Spandrel panel with reflecting glass.
6 Air space vented to outside.
7 Insulation.
8 Air-chamber.
9 Air manifold feeding air-chamber in curtain-wall.
10 Thermal conversion coils.
11 Mixing box.
12 Air return through light fixture.
13 Light fixture.
14 Air supply to mixing box.
15 Electrical outlets and telephone raceway.

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dollars per square foot just to *operate*. And if we went in there, did the total building—heat it, cool it, light it, and pay for the building for the same six dollars—they'd look like fools, wouldn't they? So they never invited us back. Yet they must have believed the figure, because from Ontario Hydro the figure stands at $4.92—and they buy the building for a dollar after 30 years.

Some Specifics:

On Interior Lighting:

The average office building downtown [in Toronto] uses two-by-four fluorescent fixtures. They'll have four lamps in them—they're 40-watt lamps—with a ballast load that's equal to a 50-watt heater in every one of those lamps. That's where the heat is coming from. Now that's cooler than the same amount of illumination from an incandescent lamp; incandescent is very inefficient—it generates a lot of heat, but not a lot of light. Fluorescents are probably one of the better choices, and the average office building using two-by-four fluorescents—giving you, say, 100 foot candles of light at desk level—is using up roughly four or four-and-a-half watts of power for every square foot of floor space. We're down to one-and-a-half watts—one-third of the power consumption. But we had to do a lot of looking into it. You don't just go throwing fluorescent fixtures all over the place; you put a good ceiling system in. We spent a good deal more money doing it—but it pays you back. High pressure lamps are even more efficient, and they're now coming into their own.

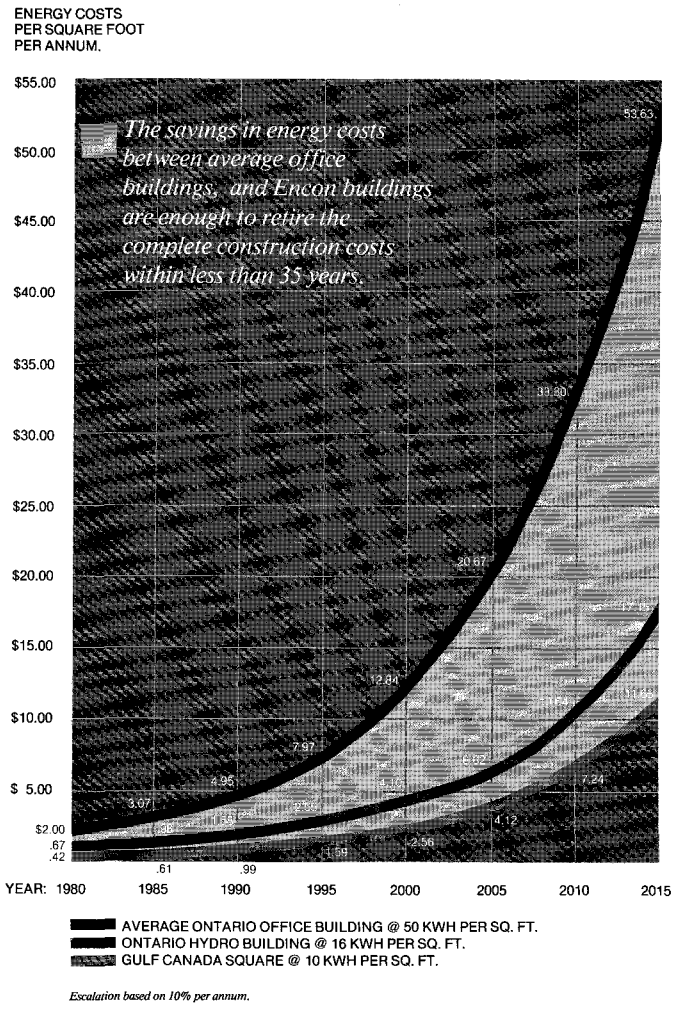
On Glass Walls:

Their cost is more than made up for by the energy savings—so they amortize themselves over the life of the building. And you have to think of the comfort, too. In the summertime they reflect most of the heat out; only something like eight percent of the light's coming through the building in Calgary—which makes it a good pair of sunglasses. If you want to, you can put up sheer drapes to soften the wall, but you don't need heavy drapes.

People are saying—especially the government—cut down your glass to, say, 50% and put up a solid wall. But that's very hard on the eyes: if you're looking at a wall like that and you see a dark spot and a light spot and a dark spot and a light spot—that's hard on the eyes. Also, you block half your view. Why should people not enjoy the view?

On the Use of Excess Heat:

The Calgary project we're doing now was originally designed to have 300 hotel rooms, 150 apartments, office space, a performing arts center—all in one complex. That makes a beautiful complex because the heat generated by the office space is going to be dispersed to the apartments and the hotel, and can be used by the performing arts center. When the performing arts center generated too much, that would be transferred back to the apartments as well. It was [to have been] a beautiful balancing act. So yes, you can use excess heat to heat up other buildings. Downtown at Hydro, the building next door was an old



one owned by the Ontario Hydro. It's now renovated and we're tapping all our equipment over to there and running the building—and it's roughly 200,000 square feet. We don't have to increase any of our equipment, none of our storage is enlarged, and we're still operating that extra space.

On the Cost of Energy:

The Ontario Hydro did research about three years ago—I think they surveyed some 80 buildings in southern Ontario. The average consumption was in the range of 53 kilowatt hours per square foot per year. This chart (see above) is based on the energy costing roughly four cents per kilowatt hour in 1980, escalating at 10%. The cost of power alone is $53 per square foot in 35 years. Now the reason we went to 35 years is that this is the term for Gulf [in Calgary]; 35 years is the end of our contract for operations. So: if this were a normal building in southern Ontario the cost of power alone is $53. This is Hydro; it costs right around $17. Gulf is in the range of $11. So the savings can get to be fantastic. And that's based on only 10% escalation a year; so far the cost hasn't been staying down that low.

In Toronto at the moment, the cost is around 2.7 cents per kilowatt hour. In New York it's around 9 cents. We're worried about it [in Canada]; the States should be *really* worried about it. □

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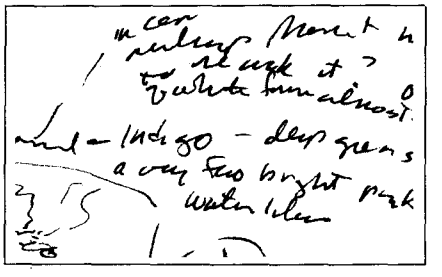
INTIMATE IMMENSITY

A Monet Pilgrimage

Pèlerinage. Pilgrimage. One of the first words I look up in my chunky red, palm-sized French dictionary. Not sure I have it right, still I want to tell someone, *Je suis en une pèlerinage.* But there is never any opportunity to try the words.

It doesn't matter. Pilgrims recognize one another without words. There are a few pilgrim souls among those who tend the places we go and welcome us: ticket sellers and guards at the Orangerie and the Musée Marmottan; Monet himself in a lifesize photo, standing in his doorway inviting us in at the Marmottan; friendly gardeners and carpenters at Giverny. There are the fellow Monet pilgrims who sit silently in joy and awe before the *Nymphéas* at the Orangerie, glancing at one another now and then with a touching need to share with strangers. And there are the Paris pilgrims everywhere, wandering in sun or mist along the Seine. No words are needed to tell me I am "home" as only a pilgrim at her far destination can be home.

On my first morning in Paris, after the manager of my small, faded hotel has shouted at me because he lost my voucher, and then called my room to say without apology, "Madame, I have found your voucher," and after my lovely coffee and croissant (for I find that the crossness of Parisian business people and officials only makes the Parisian joys more piquant, like this most delicate and enchanting croissant), I walk along the Left Bank for my first daytime view of Paris. I stop on the bridge to marvel at a sweeping view of the Seine and the Eiffel Tower and several grand buildings I don't yet know. Though I have never learned to draw, I pull out my journal and clumsily sketch. I do not wish for a camera at all, but for an artist's knowing fingers. Or the power to stop time. Crossing the Place de la Concorde to get to the Tuileries Gardens is nearly impossible, the traffic is so fierce and unabating. Two coins fall out of my raincoat pocket as I dash across; I don't know if they are English tuppence or French ten-franc pieces, but I keep running for my life, and let them roll.



Soon I have paid my three francs at the Orangerie and am entering the arched doorway to the first of the two rooms of water lily murals, which Monet gave to France. I feel as if I am walking into a spiral shell lined with brilliant, aqueous mother-of-pearl. A chambered nautilus. A magical conch. The glowing oval room seems to unfurl itself for the eye traveling in spiral motion into the room. Gradually there is a steadying, as if I have now reached the bottom of the sea in this strange vessel, and am only being rocked slowly, with slow sea motion.

It is one of the great blessings of my life, to be here at last. The rooms are a cathedral, a temple, a divine dwelling place of mingled art and nature. A Japanese woman and I are the first to arrive as the building opens at ten. (In my two long visits to the *Nymphéas* I will notice several Japanese pilgrims, reminding me of Monet's special link with Japanese art.) Other visitors arrive soon, as if coming to matins or morning meditation. Each person who enters responds differently, but nearly all with some kind of caring or awe. Wandering at first among the great, encircling curved panels of water landscape, going close to one spot or another to see the free, rough brush strokes, then standing back to experience an entire painting, or the entire room, all the paintings surrounding one. Wandering amazed from room to room. Then sitting down in front of one curving wall and gazing, almost in trance state. From time to time someone will get up and move to another side of the oval, oyster-colored couch with plush cushions on all its sides. People shift and make room for one another, welcoming fellow pilgrims, sharers of the gaze. And slowly they move between the two rooms. There is a special abundance of pleasure in the fact that while gazing at one room, one always has a subtle awareness that the other room awaits. The first room is lighter or freer, perhaps, because three of the walls in the second room are framed by the trunks of willow trees at each end, darkening the mood. In both rooms, I find myself drawn into deep and joyful meditation.

Later, I attempt to sketch each room, making a rough diagram of the oval shapes with the four waterscape walls of each room laid out flat. Why couldn't the museum make a "*Nymphéas*" model of cardboard, so that the enchanted viewer could lift up the diagram of the panels, fit tab A into slot B, and make this sacred space all over again at home? Oh, as mad an idea as my effort to sketch these rooms! I try to write notes along the edges of my diagram and in the center:

Tree. And tree's reflection in water, partly covered by hanging willow leaves. Clouds.
Surfaces:
water
tree
tree's reflection
willow leaves over reflection
lilies on water
grasses under water
sky in water
center: white lilies. This side, the edges are quite somber and nearly indigo, but the clouds, gold-pink, softly lighten.

On my diagram, I make an X by one of the arched doorways at the end of the second room, and beside it note:

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"Standing here. The effect of *all* is overpowering. The depth uncanny." But how can I *convey* the uncanny depth, the aesthetic blessing of being in a certain spot where the whole room does just what Monet meant it to do—surrounds the self with miracle?

But it is a place of shifting views and aspects. I cannot stand forever in that spot. Almost intuitively, I let my body choose a place on the plush couch, single out a waterscape to gaze at. There is a special pleasure in museums in the experience of art as shared by strangers. One experiences a subtle intimacy when, moved almost to tears, one glances gratefully at the same emotions in a stranger's eyes. I find myself smiling at the man next to me, whom I take at first for one of the several Japanese pilgrims who have been here this morning. Very softly, not disturbing the others, he speaks to me; I discover he's American, a biochemist on his way to a job in Germany, who has made this trip to Paris just to see the *Nymphéas*. When he first speaks, it's to ask me (for we pilgrims are not all sophisticates) if I've noticed that when you squint your eyes the paintings change. We marvel at all the ways they change, this being only one of them. We squint together. Then I ask him for a favor, explaining that I do not have binocular vision, and wonder what I may be missing in these paintings. "Would you close one eye, and tell me if I lose very much that way?" I ask. He does, very seriously. (Surely anyone else would have laughed at me for asking this.) After considering a few moments, he says reassuringly, "You lose a little depth . . . that's all." We part, expecting to greet one another later in front of the Monets in the Jeu de Paume, not knowing how thick the crowds will be there. Later, when we do not meet I will be worried that he may not know about the bequest of Michel Monet's private collection at the Musée Marmottan. I will feel I've let him down by forgetting to tell him.

As I walk slowly back to the first room of water lilies, I return to my sketching, trying to get the essential features of each waterscape on my diagram. Suddenly I find I've mixed them up, put one end wall where the other should be. "I am dizzy!" I scrawl in the middle of the page. Overwhelmed, I rush from the intensity of these rooms to wander awhile in the Tuileries Gardens, sit on an iron chair overlooking the Seine and watch the boats go by. Then, in a soft drizzle of rain, I stand in line to get into the Jeu de Paume, where all Impressionists are gathered.

The Orangerie was not crowded; enough admirers and viewers were there to create a feeling of communion, of *satsang*, to use the Sanskrit word meaning spiritual fellowship. Apparently the average tourist doesn't know about it or care to seek it out. But the Jeu de Paume is bursting at the seams. The crowd is so thick one can hardly see the paintings. Yet I manage to gaze for twenty minutes at "*Camille sur son lit du mort*."

Callous, the biographer had said. Only a callous, egotistic artist would use his wife's death as an occasion for a painting. I know otherwise.

The brush strokes are slashes, slashes of grief. I see him standing with his easel at the foot of her death bed. On the counterpane her pale face, her lips drawn back in abandoned pain, a grimace, a smile of sainthood. He arrays her in his grief, brush stroke tears, a bridal veil, a shroud, a cloud lifting her to heaven. Gray, white, pale blue-gray, shadows of brick and rose. The baby cries, but he continues to paint. That smile of dying, that beatific grimace, how surely he finds it in his swift-moving brush. The sharp smell of paint comforts him. The baby is quiet again. Round and round that face, tenderly and furiously, the slashes of grief, of farewell blessing. Again. There. Oh veiled bride. Oh pale rain!

Attracted by my long gaze, a teenage boy and girl look first at me, then at the painting. I bring myself back from the dream, move out of their way. Downstairs in the museum shop, I try to find a reproduction of the Camille painting. When I pick up a book to check the illustrations in it, the fat, red-haired attendant with white-powdered face slaps my hand. "*Ne touchez pas les livres!*" she barks at me. Another American tourist gets the same treatment—"*Ne touchez pas les livres!*" and a slap at his hand. With greasy fingers, she flips a few pages for us, then turns her back for a quick grab at the sandwich in a paper bag on the shelf behind her. Chewing fiercely, she turns on us again. "*Ne touchez pas les livres!*"

Giving up, I find my way out of the museum and into a restaurant, where I have an overpriced, third-rate Parisian lunch, drinking all the too-much wine I'm served, in order to get my money's worth. Then I walk tipsily into a rainy afternoon and somehow find my way to the Metro, getting off at the edge of the Bois de Boulogne, where the Musée Marmottan is the next step in my pilgrimage. I walk through a park that seems especially intended for children: donkey rides and candy kiosks, tricy-

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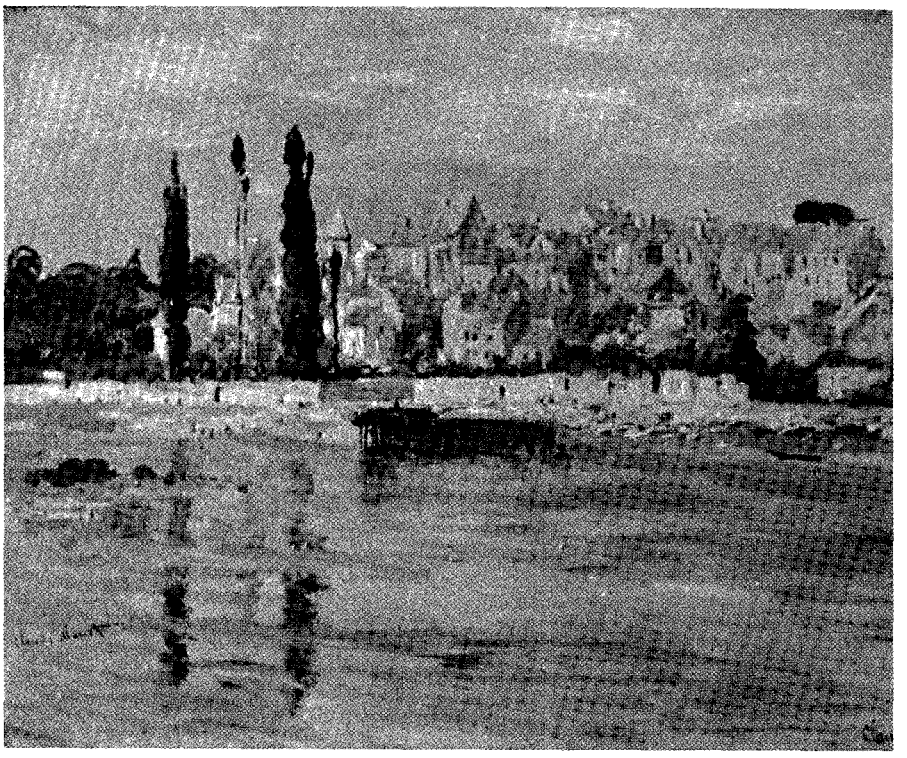

cles and baby buggies. At the Marmottan I walk upstairs to Michel Monet's bequest of his father's works. And what a lovely, whimsical touch is there! A lifesize photo of Monet in the doorway of his house greets me at the top of the stairs, meaning almost as much to me as any of the splendid paintings there. It is such a pleasure to be greeted by him!

Accepting his welcoming gesture literally, I take the train to Vernon next day, and manage to get to the only taxi ahead of anyone else from that train, persuading the driver to take me to Giverny. He lets me out on the roadway between Monet's two garden gates, and kindly explains to me, in French I can *almost* understand, that I must be sure to look behind both gates. It has begun to rain softly; I ask him three times if he will be sure to come back for me in a couple of hours. Three times he promises. Then I go through the gate that leads to the house, that pink house and the green door I have seen in the paintings. The rose trellises of the paintings are bare, but I see that young rose plants are being trained at the base of each one. All about are the blooms of a new garden, one not long established. Restoration is far from complete, but yes, it is happening. When the garden opens to the public in the Spring of 1979, those roses will climb higher on the trellises.

Clutching my special letter of admission from the curator at Versailles, I walk onto the porch, look in the windows of the house. Ah! I feel as if he is there. The curator's wife had written it would not be worth seeing, for there is no furniture at present and all has gone to ruin. But I am thrilled just to look in and see that dwelling space. Turning around, I see two pleasant-looking young gardeners, both of them black men. It takes me a moment to realize they are not American and that once more I must struggle with my twenty-years-faded high-school French. I show them my letter from Versailles, introducing me to the head gardener. He is not here today, they explain, but it is all right for me to look around. One of them makes a sweeping, welcoming gesture. Is the gate to "*les etangs*" unlocked, I manage to ask. *Oui*, they tell me. We communicate with smiles more than with words.

Wandering to Monet's large studio, the one he had built to accommodate the huge water lily paintings, I find the door open and several carpenters at work inside. One who seems to be the foreman, a portly fellow in his forties with a big peasant mustache, takes it on himself to show me the objects which Monet left in the studio: a wicker chair; the rolling easels invented to hold the great canvases; an ingenious device of wood and tin which Monet used for washing up before returning to the house. The carpenter demonstrates each item proudly, with much gesture to aid my poor understanding of French. I notice two large cotton umbrellas, the fabric faded completely colorless. Did Monet use those? I ask in French. Ah yes, for the sun, he explains delightedly. He opens one umbrella and hands it to me; I grasp the worn wooden handle and look upward at the tattered sunshade. The carpenter opens the other umbrella and holds it up himself, smiling at me beneath it. There we stand holding up our umbrellas in some kind of cosmic shower, two smiling people who speak the same language after all.

The pond where Monet cultivated the water lilies and built the Japanese footbridge is in a separate garden across the road from his house and studios. The footbridge is just beyond the gate, so that one naturally walks right onto it, pauses on the lovely curved elevation, and surveys the pond and garden. On the other side of the bridge, I sit on one of the bright green benches at the edge of the pond. It has been raining and now birds are singing. A cock has just been crowing. The pond is far from a full restoration, and I see why the Versailles Foundation is in need of contributions to complete the work and make the gardens a public museum.* I have picked up a sprig of dying roses from a branch the gardeners had cut down and left in the path. A fish jumps in the pond, splashing and leaving the inevitable widening circles in the water. There are no water lilies yet ("My husband has been fighting the water rat," explained the curator's wife in her kind letter, warning me not to expect too much). But the vibration here is strong; the inspiration is still here, and it is easy to imagine the water lilies thriving soon. As I look up at the house across the road, pink and white and green, and the hill above it with its line of trees, I think of Monet looking there from time to time as he worked.

Walking several times around the pond, remembering paintings, musing, I notice that there are only two willow trees at water's edge, one at

*The restoration and opening to the public of Claude Monet's gardens, house and studios at Giverny will require further financial assistance. Anyone interested in helping or in learning more about the project should write to:

The Versailles Foundation
375 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10022

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each end. If this is just as it was in the 1920's when Monet did those great waterscapes for the Orangerie, then the view he gives in the paintings in the second room is an impossible one. In those paintings the intensive view of the water, the clouds, the water lilies, the plants beneath the water—all that is framed by a willow at each end. Here I see that such a framing is only an imaginary one; there is something strangely inconsistent in distances and perspectives. Only a magical eye could see so closely, and yet from sufficient distance to take in the entire pond. In framing those paintings with the tree trunks, it is as if Monet wanted his vision to enclose the entire pond and the entire world it contained (and which others have written of—the layers of surfaces, depths, reflections), and yet to view the pond as if intimately close to it, almost from within it and yet above it at the same time. A view which is visually impossible, but emotionally or spiritually true. Once again, I am overwhelmed by the soul of that great adventurer in color, space and light.

* * *

I write this from a cottage near the Welsh border of England. My friends and I have spent the morning walking for miles along the hedgerows full of wild flowers, through green lanes and sheep fields, to see the ruin of a castle, with a quaintly gabled school in its courtyard. Always mistily beyond us have been the Black Hills, which are really deepest blue and green, very gently blurred with fragile mists under the wind and sun. The low, square door of our stone cottage stands open now that we are returned, and a chilly wind is blowing in. My arms, which still tingle almost deliciously from the stinging nettles I ran into picking raspberries today, are also shivering a little from the cold.

And I am remembering Giverny, and that still, still place of the water lily rooms in Paris. And I am thinking about spaces, sacred spaces, and about beauty in nature and art; trying to think what it is that Monet left for us in those rooms, and in the garden which inspired him unendingly for all those years, where he worked and struggled to convey the message of beauty even through war, grief, and his own physical suffering and struggle with blindness. At this moment I do not want to be in an enclosed space, not even the glorious space of the Orangerie. It seems important to have this wind, to walk on and on in these hills—or some hills, for surely my hills of the Susquehanna Valley at home in New York will do as well. It seems important to remember that Monet spent years painting in all weathers, both inner and outer, watching the effects of changing light, of clouds and winds and breezes (oh, think of the wind in those poplar paintings, stirring the cool geometry of the formation of trees, making it live!). All that, surely, is in the stillness of the *Nymphéas*.

Here in the Black Hills we are enclosed in a valley, or in a series of valleys opening into one another; or, come to think of it, in one huge encircling space of earth and sky. There, in Paris, in one oval room leading to another, we are given an actual enclosed space with the illusion of another space, the water lily pond, reflecting infinite space as suggested by the sky and clouds. Thus enclosure and infinity are brought together. In Gaston Bachelard's magnificent contemplative work, *The Poetics of Space*, he refers to the imaginative experience of "intimate immensity," saying that "immensity is within ourselves. It is attached to a sort of expansion of being that life curbs and caution arrests, but which starts again when we are alone." It is such expansion of the pure imagination, the pure being, that Monet seemed to mirror in his work, and which his work sets free in the beholder. I have read a moving account of Monet in his old age standing on the floor in the midst of his water lily canvases, which lay in a circle all around him. He was unwilling to part with individual paintings, for he knew that what he was creating could only be understood if one were at the center of all the paintings, experiencing them as one vision, immense and yet with the self in the intimate center.

Bachelard quotes from another writer, Milosz, whose words also remind me of Monet: "As I stood in contemplation of the garden of the wonders of space, I had the feeling that I was looking into the ultimate depths, the most secret regions of my own being; and I smiled, because it had never occurred to me that I could be so pure, so great, so fair! My heart burst into singing with the song of grace of the universe." And so, surely, with all his struggle and suffering, vision and triumph, did Monet's spirit sing as he painted. And so does that beauty-haunted spirit cause our own spirits to sing today before his amazing works; even when, far from the actual paintings, their vibrant images continue to illuminate the inner immensity.

Feeling almost painfully expanded, fulfilled, inspired—I walk through the low, square door of this stone cottage, into the lavender-scented garden, the surrounding hills, and the wind.

—Charlotte Walker Mendez

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ALBERT GOLDBARTH

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1979

There's a book about the Moomintrolls: they
live in Moomin Valley, and are The
Happy Family, round-snouted rompers
and caring. Across town my friend
John Crisp directs the 6th-graders: write
about your own Happy Family! Next door
his 8th-graders pinhole weighty paper, preparing
to watch the silhouette-play of this the
final solar eclipse of the 20th Century. "Uh,
The Happy Family tents all winter long but
stays warm!" I think an astute definition.
When my mother phones, the moon's just started

blotting the day. I have to say my
marriage is off, I have to make the circuitry
spark longdistance darkness with that
kind of message. 10:30 a.m. but
stars burn. Mars is visible, Venus. Cold,
in the miles a phone holds. My mother
chattering—trying to work up
heat that reaches. Didn't you sign your finger
forever? she'll say. It's gone totally
out now. Half the heads in town in
cardboard viewing boxes. Every carat,
dark. We got, like any fighters,

hurt in the ring. John's saying don't
look directly. They work the
sky out on paper. My own first day
in school, my mother's hand a five-point
star that went away but its light still
touched me. How long does it last? I
think directly of Elaine, a point in the brain goes
dim like concussion. Now close The
Happy Family. This was Mars, and Venus.
Timing the conversation in pennies—through
Bell Telephone's sky like a coppery lunar calendar.
How long does anything last? "They, uh,

were camping on lake ice." And, like love,
it held for a while. If I could put
John on the phone. Let her talk to his class,
let *them* say something true from where
a shadow eats at the body, and
what's left's so bright it blinds.

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VIRGINIA WOOLF'S SANITY

Who's Afraid of the Middle Years?

It is not the customary thing to regard Virgina Woolf as a model of health in the middle years, but that conclusion inevitably forces itself upon even a skeptical reader after a slow winter's perusal of the second volume of her diary. The reading was taken in small sips because, in fact, one relished the tonic of being in company with a person of such sound instincts, wholesome habits of mind, and judicious self-confidence. I prescribe the diary for those who find themselves at a certain age with a short or intermittent supply of these admirable qualities. While VW's prose about people and places might itself race the reader's pulse at times, what breathes through it in the most calming and reassuring way is her personal equilibrium, like the good temper of a friend or a spouse.

Equilibrium is meaningful only in a context of oscillation, when it primarily means an ineluctable return to the upright position, like the lifting of a rhododendron after a hard dry freeze. The image is her own (engendered by a distasteful social encounter): "No one ever suffered so acutely from atmosphere as I do; & my leaves drooped one by one; though heaven knows my root is firm enough."[1] She had a sense—not so common as it should be—that her middle years had firmed the root. In her case they had succeeded many childhood and adolescent shakings and erosions: she had a grateful sense of new stability and new abilities. Leonard and her writing and her friends were the ground of this well-being—as she knew very well. But the consciousness of one's blessings and the ability to appreciate them are themselves gifts of health.

The entries to be sure skim and jump from mood to mood—as one might expect from any honest account of a volatile mind. But the good is uppermost in her mind in these years. On the same page in which she worries about Katherine Mansfield's new book of stories bursting into fame, she marks down "& I at the prime of life" [161]; on the same page in which she faces disappointing proofs of one of her books, she rejoices in her whole circle's successes, including her own: "we have all mastered the art of life, and very fascinating it is. Am I not about to manufacture coloured papers?" [199] She roots the moods always in their context of happiness.

> The truth is that the sails flap about me for a day or two on coming back [from visiting her sister Vanessa]; & not being at full stretch I ponder and loiter. And it is all temporary. . . . [221] I will leave it here unfinished, a note of interrogation—signifying some mood that recurs, but is not often expressed. One's life is made up, superficially, of such moods; but they cross a solid substance, which too I am not going to hack my way into now. [222]

"I meant to write about death, only life came breaking in as usual," she writes (sounding momentarily like Emily Dickinson), after having had a thought of what it would be like to die suddenly: "I was feeling sleepy, indifferent, & calm; & so thought it didn't much matter, except for L." Then, without volition, she was waked up by the intense energy of her life force, which manifested itself as usual as a desire to admire the world, "to walk along the river and look at things" [168]. For her, the world held sights "too beautiful for one pair of eyes" [129].

Of course, it is partly for the famous scenes of rapture and praise that one reads the novels. In *To the Lighthouse*, Mrs. Ramsey, dazzled by the effects of the phenomenal world, silently cries out, "It is enough, it is enough." The diary also contains such moments of excitement, stimulated variously by nature, poetry and parties [See also pp. 133 and 223]. But the diary says something quite different from the novel about the place of these privileged moments within the course of life, something quieter—less visionary, to be sure—and easier for most of us to live with.

The novel rightly implies that these moments are rare: occasional brief flashes of light that the self achieves in its solitude. But it implies also—if I read it right—that the private visions are a prerequisite for a harmonious life, that Mrs. Ramsey draws from *them* the sustenance for the rest of life: the drudgery of social existence, the draining conflicting demands of others, the conquering of terrors. And thus what the novel implies is not heartening for ordinary people, who don't have visions when the sky turns color, and cannot helpfully envision a flower as the center of a structured world, as Virgina Woolf tells us she did first as a child. "I was looking at the flower bed by the front door; 'That is the whole,' I said. I was looking at a plant with a spread of leaves; and it seemed suddenly plain that the flower itself was a part of the earth; that a ring enclosed what was the flower; and that was the real flower; part earth; part flower. It was a thought I put away as being likely to be very useful to me later."[2] If you do not have visions of this sort, the message of the diary is more comforting. For its richness lies in limning, day by day, a ground of well-being sufficient in itself. What seems fundamental in the diary is VW's *continuous* immersion in life. The visions, when they came, came up naturally through that well-prepared soil.

Woolf's essay on "Moments of Being" is Proustian and élite in separating off the rare instants of vision from the rest of life, from "non-being." By non-being she means the states of mind that leave no trace in memory, often because they accompany routine, perfunctory activities. The concept of non-being is useful if it helps us to accept a certain amount of boredom as inevitable, or if it helps us to appreciate "being"; the danger

[1] *The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Vol. II, 1920-1924*, edited by Anne Olivier Bell (N.Y., London; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), p. 191. My quotations from this volume reproduce VW's own spelling and punctuation. Page numbers appear in brackets in the text. For VW's sense of "fundamental security" see also p. 126.

[2] "A Sketch of the Past," in *Moments of Being*, Unpublished Autobiographical Writings, ed. Jeanne Schulkind (New York, London; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), p. 71.

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is to set it up so high as a standard that most of life falls into the cracks of non-being below. VW seems to be doing this in the essay: "Those separate moments of being were however embedded in many more moments of non-being . . . . This is always so . . . . When it is a bad day the proportion of non-being is much larger."[3]

The diary reverses these proportions. In it she reclaimed life from non-being by witnessing and recording it. "How Lady Cromer came to tea in a charwoman's bonnet, and cut great chunks of bread for herself . . . ."[144] When VW reclaims such as that, and even lesser stuff (" 'This is real rain' says L. at the window" [184]), she not only stored up nourishment for the later Virginia and for us, but also gave us the access to our own perpetual sustenance. Not the notion that we must all write (Heaven forfend), but the notion that we must all believe we live. "Seize the day," says every diarist in one way or another. But VW, with her protuberant sacred eyes, seized so much more than others of what seemed minute, impermanent and destined for non-being that she makes the case more strongly than anyone. She believed in "the romance of the day" applied to anything under the sun. Of poor Sydney Waterlow she says "he got naked and bathed, & made the river look many sizes too small" [191]. Of Brighton: "mankind was fuming and fretting & shouldering each other about; the down was smoothly sublime: But I thought this street frenzy is really the better of the two—the more courageous" [194]. I hear the critics gasping, "But this is *art*," as if there were any art without a prior attention to life. It is true that, concomitantly, because of her curious benign circumambient glance, she did expand our idea of what can be suitably fitted within the covers of a novel. (This is what Auerbach is talking about in his chapter on the brown stocking in *Mimesis*.) But the mystery of mysteries is why to some people life seems to matter so much. And there we are back to "health," which I persist in offering as VW's happy gift.

* * *

She didn't—to begin with basics—dislike herself. Her judgments of VW were warm and friendly—so detached that they scarcely seem to have any egoism in them. She describes herself once as "a partner I usually respect and admire" [26]. Although she saw faults in her character (mainly in relation to others: she was not as "nice" as other people, she was too shy in society, she was too much affected by the atmospheres of others) no side of herself disgusted her, none of her qualities made her self-deprecating. On the contrary. She highly valued her intelligence, her enthusiasm, and her life wisdom. In June of 1920 her reputation was still to come, but she trusted herself totally as a literary critic. "Anyhow nothing shakes my opinion of a book—nothing—nothing. Only perhaps if its the book of a young person—or of a friend—no, even so, I think myself infallible. . . . and doesn't it somehow wound my sense of fitness to hear Roger mangling these exact values?" [49]. Before she became known as a writer of fiction, she counted herself "among the brilliant" [16]. If all her favorable judgments about herself were not immediately true, her belief helped to make them so. She knew she needed "boldness and self-confidence" for writing, and that she mainly possessed them. She trusted her own instincts about herself: the phrase "my wisdom teaches me" which appears once [187] was no overstatement. That she knew at this time how to promote her own happiness (the main theme of the rest of this essay) proves her judgment was right.

Liking herself, she had no quarrel with chronology: she didn't fall into her forties as into that sickbed from which no one can arise. Although conscious of accumulated years (this volume of the diary begins in 1920, when she was 38, and ends in December of 1924), she refused to believe that the future would be, in the title of a volume of Leonard's autobiography, "downhill all the way." She was, and knew herself to be, at an interesting point: on the verge of fame and literary freedom. Being *on the verge* was a crucial concept for these years. It wouldn't be wise, she knew, to come into the kingdom all at once. "In my heart, too, I prefer the nondescript anonymous days of youth . . . the sense that no one's yet anybody" [78]. She knew, as Proust did, that the state of desiring was better than the state of possessing; she also knew, as he did not, that the *best* moment of all in desiring is not the moment of most intense longing, when the object seems distant and unobtainable, but the moment when the satisfaction of possession seems near at hand, almost assured, easily imaginable, and not yet soured by attainment. So during most of this period (the years in which she published *Kew Gardens, Monday or Tuesday, Night and Day* and *Jacob's Room*, along with many critical reviews), she wrote as if popularity and reputation were coming close but were still excitingly to be won. No doubt she felt that they were. Her language is not exactly that of "nondescript anonymous youth," but it retains a buoyant sense of anticipation. "Still we're at the beginning of our works" [64]. She took symbolic control of her creative destiny in September 1920 when she refused to accept review work: "to have broken free at the age of 38 seems a great piece of good fortune—coming at the nick of time" [66].

For her, as for most of us, a conviction that we have power over our lives is a prerequisite for striding confidently into the future. Success coming belatedly gave her a strong proof of her own will power. F. Scott Fitzgerald, whose success was nothing if not early, knew more than anyone about the psychology of achievement in its relation to the life cycle:

> Premature success gives one an almost mystical conception of destiny as opposed to will power. . . . The man who arrives young believes that he exercises his will because his star is shining. The man who only asserts himself at thirty has a balanced idea of what will power and fate have each contributed, the one who gets there at forty is liable to put the emphasis on will alone.[4]

If we want to explain how a woman struck in 1913 by madness as if by lightning could seven or eight years later feel "cool and sane" and bold in the face of life, the healing that comes from proceeding onward in the life cycle must figure in the explanation.

Linking progress with age, and life with "form[s] of excitement not before glimpsed at" [21], VW was

[3] *Moments of Being*, p.70.

[4] "Early Success," in *The Crack-Up*, ed. Edmund Wilson.

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aware of being different from many people she knew, aware of being unlike Mary Hutchinson, who felt that "nothing new would ever happen again" [234]; unlike her brother Adrian, who believed that life was an examination he had failed publicly—"about 35 the lists are posted up" [18]; unlike Bertrand Russell, who said "I don't expect any more emotional experiences. I don't think any longer that something is going to happen when I meet a new person" [148]; and unlike Tom Eliot, who "makes one feel that he dreads life as a cat dreads water" [238]. Strategically, she separated herself off from such people by describing their varieties of timidity and stagnation. Reading "Prufrock," having overcome Eliot's fearfulness of middle age, she must have shaken her head at his images of debility and wistful regret. Where Prufrock says, "Too late," VW firmly declares, "There's plenty of time." She was, after all, just at the starting gate.

In herself she was alert for signs of commitment and development. She assumed that her future would almost automatically be better: that it would bring less vanity and more virtue, more self-knowledge, more powerful writing—and most of all, more life. "But still I want to make life fuller and fuller" [237]. "Next year I shall be above all that" [80], she prophesied, subduing twitches of pleasure as the requests poured in to do reviews and "preside over" destinies. "At forty I am beginning to learn the mechanism of my own brain—how to get the greatest amount of pleasure and work out of it" [206]—thus she marked an achievement and foretold further successes. Of course it occurred to her that the idea of progress might be an illusion; her answer was not to reject the illusion, but to embrace it. "[Roger Fry] is 55 I suppose; and still thinks he is about to begin to paint as he should—a merciful dispensation—a carrot to lure him across the desert" [188]. A month later, when her own illusion is at stake, the slight note of cynical doubt has vanished completely. "Anyhow, nature obligingly supplies me with the illusion that I am about to write something good: something rich, & deep, & fluent & hard as nails, while bright as diamonds" [199].

Using her diary like a magnifying glass, she investigated her soul and analyzed its needs. Self-knowledge would enable her to manipulate her self—to get more pleasure and work out of it, for starters. It needed change of activity during the day, she discovered; so she gave it fiction in the morning, some manual labor at the press or in the garden in the afternoon; then there was reading, criticism, the diary and letters to friends which filled in the chinks and evenings. The self, it seemed, liked envisioning a future chockablock full of literary and personal demands:

> I shall polish off my Essay article tomorrow, Wed. 8th. Then I think I shall try to sketch out Mrs. D. . . . A fortnight's criticism is my stint. So if that takes a week, or 10 days, & brings me to 18 Nov. I must be ready to start the Greek chapter say on the 20th . . . . First introduction of Bentley: then Odyssey: then on to Aeschylus, reading furiously the while. It is terribly easy to let the reading slip; so I must make an effort to get 2 hours either before dinner or after, & must now write to Will A.F. & refuse to go there, since I am out daily till Saturday. But oh the question of Ralph! & now I have a pressing appeal from Carrington. [211]

All this was a piece of deliberate policy. "I think the only prescription for me," she decided one day after meditating on praise and fame, "is to have a thousand interests—if one is damaged, to be able instantly to let my energy flow into Russian, or Greek, or the press, or the garden, or people, or some activity disconnected with my own writing" [107]. "I must hurriedly note more symptoms of the disease," she jots down in the anxious post-publication period of *Monday or Tuesday*, "so that I can turn back here and medicine myself next time" [108]. We are trained to spot the medical metaphors. But she was not using the word "disease" in a technical or even an entirely negative way. Some of the symptoms she describes are benign. Great swoops of misery alternated with pleasure, "twanging and vibrating." But in either case her responses were involuntary, mere reactions to reviewer's praise or blame. For a person who feels that her strength comes through will—through willing serenity especially—not having control is disturbing. By calling this situation "the disease" she reduced it, with some mockery, to its proper transient proportions, assuming health as the norm in the usual self-directed flow of her life: "all of this will be forgotten in 6 weeks time" [108]. She "medicined" herself with statements that make her the doctor more than the patient, and that anticipate a complete cure through her own adroit manipulations of her time and energy.

Most of us will never have to cope with growing fame and the hostility of reviewers, and if we are observers of the psychology of fame we may have noted how many writers succumb. Woolf rightly recognized that this was a perilous situation for her. The way she treated it is entirely characteristic, sensible, and brave. Money was not at issue—she scarcely mentions it. She saw at once that the issue was her independence from the opinions of others. She had long recognized in herself an intense desire for praise, a need to feel important ("its that that one wants" [108]). "What I had feared was that I was dismissed as negligible." She wanted not only to write—which anyone with pen and paper can do, and which amounts to a modest plan for personal salvation—but to write something durable. Both desires were threatened if she remained vulnerable to criticism. Vulnerable, her pen "stuck." She could have started it going again by staying timidly orthodox—in which case criticism would have diluted her another way. Her strategy—which she invented after her first novel, *The Voyage Out*—was to ignore the attacks, using them the way a swimmer uses the tiled ends of a pool: as a source of the springing thrust that sends her faster the way she wants to go.

> I heard from Ka this morning that she doesn't like In the Orchard. At once I feel refreshed. I become anonymous, a person who writes for the love of it. She takes away the motive of praise, & lets me feel that without any praise, I should be content to go on. [248]

"I'm to write what I like; & they're to say what they like."

> My only interest as a writer lies, I begin to see, in some queer individuality . . . but then I say to myself, is not 'some queer individuality' precisely the quality I respect? . . . . People with this gift go on sounding long after the melodious vigorous music is banal. [168]

Her judgment of her own writing (on the basis of her two first novels, which are no longer much admired)

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was basically positive; so, with some dips of discouragement she moved by and large from strength to strength, and began to produce the innovative novels, starting with *Jacob's Room*, which do endure.

Psychological work of great liberating power was clearly going on all this while, the work that was to enable her to write about her dead and then move on. *Jacob's Room* is about her brother Thoby, who died when she was twenty-four. *To the Lighthouse* is her monument to her parents. Years later she mused, about the latter, "I suppose I did for myself what psychoanalysts do for their patients. I expressed some very long felt and deeply felt emotion. And in expressing it I explained it and then laid it to rest."[5] She is open to criticism of her parents in the 1920s. She heard Lytton Strachey, and noted down his words, when he said of her beautiful mother's photograph, "I don't like your mother's character. Her mouth seems complaining" [239]. She had decided by her father's posthumous ninety-sixth birthday that he "mercifully was not. His life would have entirely ended mine." But liberation made her just and generous, rather than mean-spirited. The indignation and anger at her father's bullying—and dependency—which she expressed in 1939 in "A Sketch of the Past" were merged with other points of view in the creation of Mr. Ramsey in *To the Lighthouse*, and softened thereby. In the same novel she elided herself with her mother, whom Lytton and others of that generation would have dismissed as a mere Victorian "angel in the house": she endowed Mrs. Ramsey with creative powers for the enhancement of life that replicate her own. Her early feminist writings are also of this period (presented in two appendices in the diary). Their characteristic note is crisp, detached, and broadly satirical. "Thus, though women have every reason to hope that the intellect of the male sex is steadily diminishing, it would be unwise, until they have more evidence than the great war and the great peace supply, to announce it as a fact" [339]. When she praised feminism, it was (in her typical imagery of health and mildness) because "its the feminists who will drain off this black blood of bitterness which is poisoning us all" [167].

In her own psychic life she had succeeded in draining off much black blood. The poison that seems to me to have been most intrinsic—and I would have said most ineradicable—was her horror of people, especially in masses. What sounds like gross insensitivity or snobbery in the beginning of the diary arises from this neurotic horror that overwhelmed her in childhood, when her visions of evil had been connected with human beings, fighting with others or ending their own lives. "I only know that many of these exceptional moments brought with them a peculiar horror and a physical collapse; they seemed dominant; myself passive." Yet she is finally able to say that the masses in the street in Brighton are "courageous"—an attribute chosen from high up in her closet of values. She had found an antidote to the "peculiar horror." We will not be surprised to hear her ascribe the health-giving power to writing. She continued to have visions of evil, but found she could deal with them. "This suggests that as one gets older one has a greater power through reason to provide an explanation, and that this explanation blunts the sledge-hammer force of the blow." She didn't entirely understand how writing healed and made whole, but she delighted in the process. "Perhaps this is the strongest pleasure known to me."[6]

In the process of getting what she needed for harmonious development, the strength of her desires, her self-confidence, and her tactical ability were at one point all severely tested, and met the test. By 1923, living in suburban Richmond and commuting to London had begun to seem too arduous to VW, and too unnecessary. They had moved out in 1913, at the time of her long madness. She decided she was capable of living in London and wanted to move back, for "music, talk, friendship, city views, books, publishing, something central and inexplicable" [283]. "London thou art a jewel of jewels & jasper of jocunditie" she quoted in exhilarated anticipation.

To obtain the jewel, she had to struggle against Leonard's idea of what was best for her: he feared that the excitations of London would be bad for her health. His fears for her had always been able to shake her self-confidence: we hear the terms of the conflict vividly in a revealing passage of the diary:

> I could not stay at 46 last night [46 Gordon Square, London], because L. on the telephone expressed displeasure. Late again. Very foolish. Your heart bad—& so my self-reliance being sapped, I had no courage to venture against his will. Then I react. Of course its a difficult question. For undoubtedly I get headaches or the jump in my heart; & then this spoils his pleasure, & if one lives with a person, has one the right—So it goes on. [222]

Leonard still insisted that she leave parties early, that she restrict her visitors when she had a headache. These were useful devices for inducing calm; indeed, these careful avoidances may have helped VW to the idea of devising preventive strategies in many psychic situations. But the picture of LW directing her life has its unpleasant side, which lay in overestimating her inclination to madness. He had been opposed to her having children, and had sought and found a doctor who would say it was ill-advised. (She regretted being childless all through this period; she envied her sister and other mothers; it was the one emptiness no strategy could fill.) Now, when she found a house in London, in Tavistock Square, LW reacted by becoming "despondent or grim."

Virginia, usually docile, wanted to make the leap. She understood his objections only too clearly. "But half the horror is that L. instead of being, as I gathered, sympathetic has the old rigid obstacle—my health. And I can't sacrifice his peace of mind, yet the obstacle is surely now a dead hand, which one should no longer let dominate our short years of life—" [250]. In the ten years since her last mental illness, she had not only gotten rid of her symptoms, she had also purged something that could have been eternally incapacitating; her *fear* of madness. Her "health" was good—"as good as it will be in this world, and a great deal better than it ever has been" [285]. "What I dislike is feeling that I'm always taking care, or being taken care of" [245].

For herself, she treated the decision to move to London as a question of the kind of risk that middle-aged, comfort-loving and cowardly people would not venture, but that the self-confident, youthful and courageous

[5] *Moments of Being*, p. 81.

[6] *Moments of Being*, p. 72.

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would. "I like myself for taking my fences" [285]. She urged others to take risks—Lytton Strachey, for example, who always needed to be pushed at life: "Still I advised the leap, as I always advise leaps" [276]. She felt, using Vanessa as an example, that it was in the family character to be adventurous. Although she could not see how the argument with Leonard could be settled amicably, her reader cannot see how she could fail to prevail. There was a mixture of practicality and determination in her that steamrolled over obstacles. As she knew herself: "But when things come upon me in a clap I generally achieve them, because they are then things that matter to me" [249]. In March of 1924 they did in fact move into the house in Tavistock Square. It was an "achievement" she said, when once they were settled and getting used to the level of London noise. Indeed: Leonard cannot have been brought around merely by the social diversion of London, the general attractiveness of risk-taking, the assurance that they would both continue to write, or even by his desire not to thwart Virginia in her pleasures. She must have convinced him, by her self-confidence and fearlessness, that her health was no longer in question. She took a gamble on the unknown future.[7]

This was one of the few alienations in the Woolves' exceptionally good marriage. It may have been chaste (as is now alleged on the basis of skimpy evidence and eager inferences). If so, it seems whole-souled enough in all other ways to have compensated amply for that defect. So much has been written about Leonard's devotion and Virginia's gratitude that one need mention only the other elements of her feeling for him that are strikingly brought out by the diary. First of all, she thought him, as a physical presence, immensely distinguished, reassuring, superior: his gaunt, intelligent, sensitive face was to her a model of what a human face should be. For the most part their interests and values coincided so completely that a communal "we" became second nature to her. Describing one of Leonard's spells of self-doubt, she once wrote "our depression" [232]. Their development, their successes, moved so nearly parallel that she could feel they were together (as Shakespeare has it) a "mutual pair." "We are busy and attach importance to hours" [222]. "We have bitten off a large piece of life—but why not?" [210]. Perhaps because their accomplishments kept pace (at least in this period), she accepted his without any of the sense of rivalry that afflicted her when a friend (like Katherine Mansfield or Lytton Strachey) succeeded. "I own I like a good compliment to L.: not boastfully; it seems right, I suppose" [34]. It must be an intimate relationship indeed where one spouse wonders whether pride in the other might be a form of boastfulness. If she wanted company, it was partly to come back, deliciously, to their solitude à deux. "I like continuing our private life, unseen by any one" [36].

She was lucky, we may say, in her marriage as in her work. But she was luckier in her temperament, which had been able to absorb good fortune without guilt or anxiety. In 1924 she speaks of her "invincible optimism" [283] as of a settled characteristic. When she was out of spirits, it was a kind of accident of the surface, not intrinsic: "No one in the whole of Sussex is so miserable as I am; or so conscious of an infinite capacity of enjoyment horded [*sic*] in me, could I use it" [133]. She was often happy, and she was able to acknowledge, state and relish it. Volume I ended with an amazing assertion, "Yet I daresay we are the happiest couple in England." But she felt this way again and again during these years.

> And now I have a multitude of pleasant jobs in hand, & am really very busy, & very happy, & only want to say Time stand still here; which is not a thing that many women in Richmond could say I think. [212]

Although *To the Lighthouse* frequently reminds the reader that happiness is a "little strip of pavement over the abyss" [72], the diary says so only once. In the glow of daily life described here, even the dreadful illness of 1913 was transformed.

> I've had some very curious visions in this room too, lying in bed, mad, & seeing the sunlight quivering like gold water, on the wall. I've heard the voices of the dead here. And felt, through it all, exquisitely happy. [283]

Is this possible? Did she lie to her diary? Or, more exactly, did she change the proportions, for the sake of that older reader—Virginia Woolf at 50—who would scrutinize the pages from superior heights of well-being? She confesses once that she is hiding her "melancholy," out of "vanity": "I want to appear a succes even to myself" [72]. But the essential fact is that she had got into a habit of sincerity with the diary so strong that when she wanted to indicate how honest she was with Katherine Mansfield, she said she could talk to her "without altering my thought more than I alter it in writing here" [45]. This, we feel, is the human voice as unmediated as we are likely to find it, and it is priceless. If she had tried to hide her abiding happiness (out of a more modern kind of vanity), it would have come through inadvertently: she had come, without even knowing it, to take for granted so uniformly high a level of contentment that anything less became exceptional. "Yesterday," she writes with startling—presumptuous—naïveté, about nothing more terrible than a tooth extraction and a brief absence of Leonard's to make a speech, "yesterday I think I was unhappy all day long." [30].

* * *

VW committed suicide in 1941, and the result has been that many people read her life backward, adjusting it to that fact—or attempting to. A diary is a life read forward only, however—as we all live our own lives—and when it has been kept assiduously, as VW kept hers, it forces its readers to live in the same continuous, daily way. Her life seen through the diary has only the shape she gave it to that point. It may be clear merely from what I have quoted that she saw it organically, as a living, growing thing, a tree rooted solidly, giving and receiving. It was a sane and fecund shape. Few readers will regard it without some envy and emulation.

Reading forward this way—and waiting eagerly for the next volume of the diary—we are likely to find the bouts of madness and the suicide inexplicable. The psychological expla-

[7]As it happened, she had a collapse in 1925 and again in 1929, according to her biographer, Quentin Bell. We have to wait for the publication of the next volume of the diary to learn how she treated these episodes herself. Bell provides one absorbing quotation (Volume II, p. 149), in which VW transforms the second episode into a gainful period of creative rest.

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nations are still very tentative. (The psychiatrists interested in brain chemistry feel that they are closer to explaining it than the pure mentalists. The latter—usually Freudians—are forced to see the life as of a piece with the illnesses, whether there are demonstrable symptoms or no.) The most practical way to start, admitting the evidence of the diary, is to admit (in Rosemary Dinnage's words) the possibility of an "encapsulation of a piece of madness within an otherwise sane—though fragile—personality."[8]

Virginia Woolf's life paradoxically makes one feel that we know even less about sanity than about pathology. Perhaps this is inevitable historically: the way into modern psychology led through abnormal behavior based on early childhood trauma, and psychology still bears the mark of its origins. The most interesting new work is being done now in normal development in the middle years. With admirable objectivity, psychologists are beginning to recognize that many people move gamely through life without their assistance. Their mature years bring about what is sometimes now called "the natural healing of the wounds." The phrase is grim, and some will want to repudiate its implications and defend their early years. But it seems to be applicable to the period of VW's life that this diary covers. For my part, I would rather read her diary than any number of cases and theories of "normal development." No doubt the mental strategies that VW created for her own life—her work schedule, her risk-taking, her exercises in comparative optimism, her languages of anticipation and cure—would not work for everyone. We each must invent our own. What the diary argues, generally and implicitly, is that doing so is a kind of heroism of the inner life. Learning to deal with our own lives would surely be easier if we could believe in this. That the assurance comes from Virginia Woolf should keep no one from reading the diary with care. The wise will take their lessons where they find them.

–Margaret Morganroth Gullette

[8]"The Starved Self," *New York Review of Books*, Feb. 22, 1979. Dinnage is writing about anorexic patients. Some manic-depressives could be described in the same way. VW in her illnesses demonstrated symptoms of both anorexia and manic-depression.

SYNECDOCHE

Brief Poetry Notices

China Trace, by Charles Wright. Wesleyan. $3.95 (paper)

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

The conclusion to that trilogy Wright began with *Hard Freight,* this scintillant book contains poems so gorgeous they defy successive reading. The poet can rightly be called the St.-John Perse of American verse.

Killing Floor, by Ai. Houghton Mifflin. $7.95

☆ ☆ ☆

Steak tartare. The raw egg isn't always mixed in completely, but Ai has worked the meat over—and serves it up—with her bare hands. The 1978 Lamont Poetry Selection of the Academy of American Poets.

Forget the Sky, by Paul Jenkins. L'Epervier Press. $3.95 (paper)

☆ ☆

A poet possessed by the rage, not for order but for premature publication. There are the makings of a poet here in Jenkins' internalization of experience, but not enough strong poems to constitute a book.

Appalachian Winter, by Betsy Scholl. Alicejamesbooks. $3.50 (paper)

☆ ☆

Earnest, middle class dredgings of the feminist poetry Adrienne Rich mines so magnificently.

Say It, by Roland Flint. Dryad Press. $3.75 (paper)

☆ ☆

A pleasant, sentimental and largely formless book, half of which is prose (prose poems? maybe) as interesting—or tiresome, depending on taste—as those vignettes strangers tell you in bars.

Hello, Darkness: The Collected Poems of L.E. Sissman, edited and with an introduction by Peter Davison. Atlantic-Little Brown. $9.95.

☆ ☆ ☆

Not to be missed, if only because Sissman's talent was bizarre: at once rhymester of *vers de societé,* confessional poet à la Lowell and serious social commentator. His temperament was altogether Johnsonian in its concern for decorum and life's brilliant finishes—and for those fissures where eccentric genius unpredictably pokes its dark head. Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for 1978.

The Collected Poems, by F.T. Prince. Sheep Meadow Press. $4.95 (paper)

☆

An Englishman of the Auden-Spender generation, Prince is not one of those four or five. This is claustrophobic poetry, more cluttered than a 19th century parlor, the air as incestuous and stale. With the recent ban on commercial sleeping pills, you may want to invest in this answer to an insomniac's prayers.

Stained Glass, by William Mills. Louisiana State. No price shown.

☆

Prose untransformed. A high example: "The flower's memory / Is very long. / It rarely opens / Itself in the cold." *Et cetera.*

Signs, by Margaret Gibson. Louisiana State. No price shown.

☆ ☆ ☆

Spare, direct language both poetic and accessible. "If the flower / roots / let its speech / transplanted / be love." Other LSU poets please study. Illustrations by Charles Chu.

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The "Poetry" Anthology, edited by Daryl Hine and Joseph Paresi. Houghton Mifflin. $10.95.

☆ ☆ ☆

Lots of memorable old friends, some interesting acquaintances and not a few total bores have been invited to this gathering. You won't want to miss it, if only to see how they mingle.

Comforting the Wilderness, by Robert B. Shaw. Wesleyan. $3.45 (paper)

☆ ☆

Affable, elegant, well-mannered poems confined to that middle range of feeling where most lives are lived out. Nothing you would want to turn to when life gets you down—or, for that matter, up.

The Afterlife, by Larry Levis. University of Iowa. No price shown.

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Levis, unlike many Neo-Surrealists, has not forgotten a poem is more than a string of images. These are tender, human utterances, the voice natural, even as one hears in it the strains of a music from south of the border. The 1976 Lamont Poetry Selection of The Academy of American Poets.

Out-of-the Body Travel, by Stanley Plumly. Ecco. $6.95

☆ ☆ ☆

Haunting epiphanies in chiaroscuro. Plumly has difficulties at times manipulating light and dark with the legacy of formal verse he has carried with him, but many of the poems, especially those to his father, are remarkable and moving.

The Crowd Inside, by Elizabeth Libbey. Carnegie-Mellon University. $4.50

☆ ☆ ☆

Another strong first book, pensive and meditative. Libbey consistently muses herself beyond her poem's original claims and comes to own the territory where one would think she had but squatter's rights.

Uncertain Health, by Stuart Friebert. Woolmer/Brotherson. $3.95 (paper)

☆ ☆ ☆

A volume centered around the experience of fatherhood. The verse adopts an informal stance too colloquial for daily speech, too elliptical for poetry—it's a bit like listening to detective-show dialogue—but the substance sometimes overcomes its vehicle to reach at truth.

Uncertainties and Rest, by Timothy Steele. Louisiana State. No price shown.

☆ ☆

Traditional poems in a first collection. There is tradition *and* tradition; in this instance it consists of endless iambs, self-conscious epigrams, and silly asides to the reader.

Paper Boy, by David Huddle. Pittsburgh. $3.95 (paper)

☆ ☆

A kind of bare-bones *Spoon River Anthology*. Nearly every piece—short-lined and terse—ends, like a lazy short story, with a low-key, underplayed, ironic, throwaway line which serves to make all characters, actions, and poems fit the same tedious paradigm.

Tenebrae, by Geoffrey Hill. Houghton Mifflin. $7.95

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Tradition with class. It is probably true that Hill is the best of the English poets—his easy control of language, of cadence and rhyme, lend to these often solemn poems a liveliness rare in our prosaic age.

Like Wings, by Philip Schultz. Viking. $8.95

☆ ☆ ☆

A first book, Whitmanesque in vigor, by a poet who savors the delights of earth yet always dances a few feet off the ground.

Witnessing, by Carolyn Maisel. L'Epervier Press. $3.95 (paper)

☆ ☆ ☆

Centrifugal and centripetal, the energy behind these poems seeks expression in language genuinely photographic. Maisel is master of the wide-angle and the close-up, the eye behind her lens never flinching.

Alive and Taking Names, by Colette Inez. Ohio University. $3.50 (paper)

☆ ☆ ☆

A bouillabaise of verbal delights from a cook who spices what could be self-pity with saucy wit.

Ashes: Poems New and Old, and *7 Years from Somewhere*, by Philip Levine. Atheneum. Each $4.95 (paper)

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Issued simultaneously, these two volumes give us the state of Levine's art today and a decade back (*Ashes* reprints 13 poems from *Red Dust*, published by Kayak Press in 1971). Over these years Levine has drawn closer to the mythic, relies less on the actual, to inform his remarkable visions. A hell of a poet, really.

The Ten Thousandth Night, by Gwen Head. Pittsburgh. $3.95 (paper)

☆ ☆

Poems about everything and nothing; a page of notes following the collection underscores their various academic occasions. It's difficult to escape the feeling that this book has been padded out to a respectable bulk.

New Shoes, by Kathleen Fraser. Harper & Row. $4.95 (paper)

☆ ☆ ☆

A restless and credible journal of self-exploration which must be read in sections for the persona projected as much as for the images. Especially memorable are the Magritte poems.

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THE EXHIBITORS

To Audiences Then and Now

It's an old house, the *Plaza,* traditional looking, capacity 539, with a top of $2.50 for adults. The facade was used for a Chevrolet print ad once: that choice by some advertising agency art director making it a symbolic *American* theatre.

Inside is very clean, and the decor is eclectic, interestingly not harmonious. There are 1930s-Modern sconces in the auditorium, old-fashioned plush seats, maroon walls, a fantastic theatre carpet in the aisles. It's a geometric design in bright colors; they're not leaves, not flowers, but for damn sure it's pure theatre carpet. The lobby has posters and a drinking fountain with a plant growing in it. There's the *exotic* candy counter where it's real butter on the popcorn, and out here, oddly, a different carpet. Eclectic, but when the *Plaza* was being renovated two years ago the decor came from several theatres (theatres die these days); the quintessential carpet, for instance, from the old *Fox* in Burlingame, 30-odd miles south of San Francisco. Now it's in the *Plaza,* happily, and that's in Petaluma, 50 miles north of San Francisco.

There are some questions about its history. Once, in the '20s at least, it was called the *Mystic* and played silent movies. Some other time it was a legitimate house that played vaudeville. Most recently, before its present incarnation, it showed porn. Apparently it was built around 1911, and when it was being renovated to open as the *Plaza,* they discovered a long bricked-up dressing room in the back wall.

What it plays now is film in repertory—a new show, a double bill, almost every night. A successful admixture of theatrical features, old and new, The Rocky Horror Picture Show, documentaries, some eroticism; maybe they sell out once every two weeks, but the house grossed $220,000 last year, $70,000 of which

was candy. The profit—between $25 and $30,000—it was split between the employees and the investors.

The *Plaza* makes money, proudly its young co-owners and managers, the *exhibitors,* Don Taylor and Ben Myron, say. "Some theatres don't make money at all. There's a twin theatre in a shopping center across town. I don't know what they are playing, but I know they don't have more than twenty people in each side. So we have four hundred people here tonight." Chains exist, they say, so they can carry weak theatres, ones that if they were independent would close. Taylor and Myron say the trouble is most exhibitors don't know about movies, don't go to movies, don't care. "To them, it's just a product."

As it happens these two, who were boyhood friends, and already partners in a book store, became exhibitors because of a chain, the Blumenfelds, who own or run almost all the theatres in Marin County, California. Officially Taylor and Myron joined forces in 1973, leased the old downtown Mill Valley bus terminal and put in a paperback book store. (Their ultimate fantasy—now—still is "a book store, a movie theatre, a performing arts theatre, and a good restaurant, all under one roof.") In the whole year they opened, the *Sequoia* in Mill Valley (a Blumenfeld Theatre) played "The Sting." There was subdued muttering in the community; and in the "Book Depot" the two of them thought up and got together and borrowed (Taylor's wife, an RN, cosigning the note) $3,000 to start a mail-order book company *AND* "The Saturday Night Movie." Actually it all went to the latter, which in competition with the endlessly running "Sting"—and because it was a good idea—was immediately successful.

"Saturday Night Movie" rented the Odd Fellows Hall in Mill Valley, and screened theatricals in 16mm—good films: "Persona," "Amarcord," "White Dawn," and some schlock too. It was a kind of family-lodge-hall-movie-in-creaky-wooden-chairs experience, but it flew. And they were showmen too—staging promotional events: Arnold Schwarzenegger came along with "Pumping Iron" and there were others. They had door prizes and a pretty faithful audience. When they sold out to open the *Plaza* up north in Petaluma which was, also, immediately successful, the new owners carried on; "Saturday Night Movie" continues, successfully I assume, today.

It might be noted with some irony that the success of these "small is beautiful" movie enterprises stand in some contrast to the industry wail that it can only make 15 million dollar Blockbusters because that's the audience out there—that there is no real market for anything else. Is it that "market" must be measured in millions—not thousands—to be real?

The *Plaza's* bill is a joint effort. Each partner carries a pencil and makes a list. Then they sit with the lists, often virtually "identical," and decide the tentative upcoming programs. They have access to the whole of what is in release, to new pictures after their first run. When a picture *breaks,* it plays one house in the city, one down on the Peninsula, and one in Marin. Then, in eight or ten

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weeks, it moves to Ignacio and Santa Rosa. Now it shows everywhere at the same time—the national break, the so-called sub (for subsequent) runs.

With a tentative program they call their booker, who contacts the distributors and finds out the prices. The distributor, the middle man, gets a certain amount to let exhibitors rent the pictures, of course; there's a guarantee, and a percentage of the gross ticket receipts. The bigger (more popular) the picture the higher guarantee the distributor asks. Understand that guarantee means that even if nobody came the exhibitor pays. If the percentage (which can sometimes be bargained lower in return for a bigger guarantee) exceeds the guarantee then the distributor gets that. The prices the booker (and their booker only works with Repertory Theatres, seventeen in all, one of which he owns) brings back to Ben and Don, and they have to decide then whether their choices will play better than the asking prices—whether they should bargain, book for two days, one day, or not at all. The broker, in the end, makes the deals. The *Plaza* gets the bill from the distributors immediately; they have thirty days to pay.

It does not take a lot to see that in the exhibition is where another rub in movie money is. Distributors (and producers) often accuse exhibitors of stealing, of down-reporting the ticket sales so they pay less and pocket more. Taylor and Myron say it happens, and maybe it's relatively easy, but it's also dangerous business. "We're trying to establish a reputation so distributors will have faith in us." Audiences can be monitored, and a wisp of suspicion calls down accusations. The distributors have a network; when one knows they all do, and they can withhold popular films.

In all this the candy counter as part of the *Plaza's* success should not be forgotten. It is, per person, one of the highest grossing of any around. "I mean," Don Taylor says, "a small restaurant brings in seventy thousand a year." In fact, that it does so well is because it is truly a cornucopia of exotics: imported chocolates, Lindt, Zaanland, Droste; the gourmet "Jelly-Belly Jelly Beans"; carrot cake, brownies, chocolate chip cookies, oatmeal cookies; fresh popcorn with real butter; Häagen-Dazs ice cream; Kosher all-beef hot dogs. "Our candy counter," they say, "is real elaborate." Ben adds that he always looks at candy counters in theatres, sometimes going to see that only and not the film. "I've never seen one good as ours," he says, "or as unique."

"We're a good partnership," Don says, "good at starting things, but I don't think either of us is good at staying in one place. Once it's started and going we want to move on." As of now the two of them are putting together a live concert hall in Petaluma. To be called *Phoenix*, it's due to open soom. They're also thinking about producing a movie, "because it sounds like it would be fun to do."

Recently they were invited to a private screening of another long delayed film that Francis Coppola's company is producing. Called "The Black Stallion," it will be Carol Ballard's first feature credit. At the screening, it seems, Francis was sitting in the row behind them. However many million in debt, his career in hostage to the success of "Apocalypse Now," they overhear him saying how it was the theatre owners who make all the money. Don Taylor and Ben Myron looked at each other and smiled.

2. Power Lifting

Carol Conners, star of "The Erotic Adventures of Candy," featured in "Sweet Savage," is booked into the Eros Center at the *O'Farrell* Theatre (the Show-Place of the Mitchell Brothers pornographic chain). "CAROL IS BACK!!!" the announcement reads, with an invitation to attend a special public relations preview, to watch her perform in her other *persona*. Refreshments and "other goodies" are promised. Scheduled for the morning, the invitation includes staying for her smash opening show at noon.

"I was California State Power Lifting Champion," she says, standing on the stage in her relatively modest bikini, "which is picking up the most amount of weight that you can at one time—in three lifts: bench press, squat, and dead lift. For the one hundred and twenty-three pound weight class I set all those records, and I set a total three-lift record.

"This is something that is sanctioned by the AAU, of which I am a member. It's a contest, but you don't compete for money, obviously; you win trophies and certificates. It's a lot of fun, a good clean sport, and, I think, really good for women, because, look what it's done for me!

"There are three judges, and they have three lights—white or red. If you get two white lights that means your lift was good, if you get three that's perfect, but if you get two red lights that means your lift was disqualified. The whole thing about power lifting is technique, not so much how strong you are. It's the swiftness of it, the gracefulness, just getting in there and doing it real fast.

"I don't work my biceps. The only muscles I work I wouldn't mind over-developing. What power-lifting does is work on all the basic areas of the body, the bench press for the chest, and to firm and tone the arms. With the squat, from your ass on down it firms and tones everything. Women are fortunate in that they don't develop muscles like men; they don't get that big bulk. It's all firming and toning!

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"My coach in LA is an Olympic trainer, and as it stands right now there's a very good chance of having power lifting entered in the Olympics as a competitive sport. If that happens he'd like me to train for it. You see, how I got into it was that I was into body building for several years, picking up weights, fooling around with them; I was doing the three basic lifts. Then I saw a coach on TV, so I called up and said, 'I'd like to try that power lifting.' So he said, 'come on down to the gym.' When he saw what I could do, he said he'd like to have me on his team. In the future I can see myself dead lifting with three hundred and fifty pounds, bench pressing with one seventy, squatting with two fifty.

"But, if it came to turning down a contract for work because of a meet, well, I'd work. Because that's what I really enjoy. Power lifting is a hobby of mine, but the priority is work. Live shows especially is what I really enjoy doing. Anyway, you wouldn't really want me to give up my work—my career? You *wouldn't* want me to do that—*would you*? Well, I'm glad you could make it this morning, and you're all welcome to stay and see my opening show."

The show is certainly a pornographic something else! There's not a weight in sight. But swift and graceful, all that lifting, squatting, pressing—firming and toning, indeed! A pretty fair technique, worth two white lights for sure—maybe three.

3. Automation

That the pictures appear on the screen at your local theatre (if you go out to the theatre, if you don't have TV, a cable of some kind, or perhaps a home video tape playback machine) is, obviously, because there are two projectors in a booth at the top and back of the house. Who doesn't know that music was combined with movies, magnificent organ or tinny piano depending on the opulence of the house, partly to cover up the distracting rhythmic clatter of the projector running—the film snapping through the gate?

This machine (the obverse of a camera) is the hardware of the industry, and in the theatre, which is where the money comes, where the audience waits to be satisfied, there's an operator to put on the reels, coordinate the ending of one and the start of another (you know, that little flash or circle or something that pops in the top right hand corner of the screen, that's the cue), and rewind them when they are done. And, as it gives in our age often, another job—this one—may be obsolete.

For no longer on the horizon, but available, and already installed here and there, is the automatic projector. With a capability of 4½ hours of continuous programming and no rewinding it seems a matter of time until exhibitors balance the cost of the projectionist against the cost of the machine.

So watch out in the theatres now, when the clapping starts because the picture's out of focus or there's no sound, maybe there's nobody up there to hear.

4. Hello Darkness, My Old Friend . . .

The discussion at the union meeting recently became heated, an old radical from the sixties—*The Movement*—excoriating the monolithic structure of our parent organization. It's the parliamentary structure, the constitution and by-laws, administration, bureaucracy, the slow sometimes-inefficient ballot process—all of that he would cut through to get the problem solved. With his beard and his *Birkenstocks*, he is vintage, to be seen with nostalgia, some anger, some pain. But that was that romantic time, right there, in 1979, the impatience with process, the fascism of the élite, and some of this was what caused that age to founder. After the enthusiasm waned, the energy flagged, something was beaten out by the clubs of the martials and police, shot out by the bullets of the guard, there was no structure to fall back on and no frame to act as support.

Seeing and hearing it again in this personification (from an extremely sincere, dedicated man) the recollection is of how much was good back then, how much was shallow and transitory, how many casualties came from it, dead and wounded, both in Viet Nam and here.

* * *

The week before last I was working on a commercial where the associate producer was a woman who had just come to the movie business, after an eleven year career in another field. She had been an occupational therapist, an O.T., because, she said, she'd seen the motion picture "Lilith," which was made in 1963, released in '65, and prefigured in many ways the '60s and its travail.

It was Robert Rossen's last film, and he was a sick man when he was directing it, troubled by ailments (he died in 1966 at the age of 58), his awful relationship with the star (Warren Beatty), and some terrible *angst* (he was among the industry people who recanted to the House Un-American Activities Committee). On

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the surface it is a picture about people who are insane, who have sought a refuge there from the terrors of so-called reality, and the people who take care of them, often also troubled too. But, on another level, it is also a picture that probes what insanity really is.

The last line is "Help me!" From the mouth of the falling anti-hero, the star, this cry is to the principal O.T. (the actress, Kim Hunter, whom the associate producer had fancied and emulated in life), and the chief psychiatrist at the plush private sanitorium. He has been portrayed in the picture as a dark troubled man, his attitude towards his work sometimes ambiguous, his feelings mixed, awed by the complexity of the mind. There's a telling scene when, at a staff meeting, slides of the crazy webs of schizoid spiders are projected, and he speaks in bemused tones about them, evincing a fascination with the chaos the wildly assymetrical webs bespeak.

Meanwhile, upstairs the certified crazy Lilith (Jean Seberg—succubus and witch too) has made her room (her space) a beauty, a triumph, a symmetry, all out of her fantastic unreality . . . or is it reality—? That's a question to pose; it's not a salient one still?

* * *

Thoughts in the air pursue a certain spatial logic, a synchronism, the structure of existence. Recently, on TV, there was an opportunity to see "The Graduate," a picture released in 1967, and enormously popular in its time among the disaffected. I saw it then and didn't like it, but I wasn't liking much of anything then either; I wanted to see it again—measure it against the contexts of the two times, faulty or not. Having lived through several eras, each with a distinct *persona,* to contemplate *change* in both the abstract and concrete, ah—that's the trouble and triumph of advancing years. In truth I didn't like it much this time either, but for different contemporary (and more rational) reasons.

Dustin Hoffman (it was his first picture) plays the brilliant college student who is disaffected and beset by parent figures, demanding that he live up to their expectations. Old hat now (and still worthy of close examination) that's *the generation gap.* For a little more complication, he also has an affair with one of his parents' best friends, the renowned Mrs. Robinson, and then falls in love with her daughter. In the end all this is worked out after a great chase and a stop-the-wedding scene. The picture looks great, the characters are all well-acted, and quite handsome, but none of them seems to have a relationship to the group, a unity in this particular film. Rather are they personifications of satiric statements, caricatures, clever, at times very funny, but unconnected. I could not believe that he was the son of *those* two, or *what* about the father of the girl, and what the hell *did* Mrs. Robinson expect? It seems these characters were blocks to fit into a scheme of a plot.

Mike Nichols, "The Graduate's" director, was trendy and a little self-indulgent, and that kind of loose sort of abstract not quite linear series of episodes was a style (and often right on) of those times. "There's a great future in plastics," one of his father's friends advises Hoffman. Today the irony of that statement has long since been inundated with its terrible truth. The picture opens and closes with Simon and Garfunkle's great song, "The Sound of Silence."

Hello darkness, my old friend . . .

—Lawrence Sturhahn

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SONYA DORMAN

THE CROWS

Sweet Briar, Virginia

Cows come out of the barn into long suits
of sunlight. Two hawks sidle over
the arbor, I rest in its shade.

When night's chasm releases the moon, one white grape,
wine drenches the field, enters chimneys.

Fence posts, in early fog, stand around
like neighbors. If I say hello to them
no one laughs but the crows.

I never forget the crows, bringing news in
from other counties. They preen in a tulip tree's
misty branches. Rain sleeks them, a thousand
small white grapes sliding past their beaks.

Bean poles pull the green up their long necks.
The farmer, his dog leaping off on thin strings
of leg-shadow, stamps over the cattle guard in red boots.

He says it's a good morning. I say yes, this
is fine country, and the crows share it,
consulting over someone's liver.

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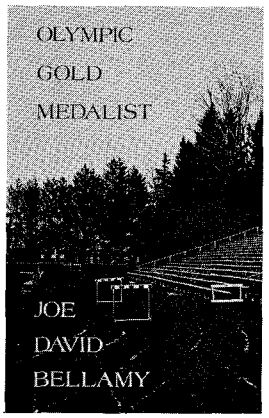

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